# PLAINE AND FAMILIAR EXPOSITION OF THE Eleuenth and Twelfth Chapters of the Prouerbes of Salomon.

13 14 15 16 17 & 18 Chapters

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PROVERBS I. 5.

*A wise man shall heare and increase in learning, and a man of vnderstanding shall atteine vnto wise counsels.*

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# AN EXPOSITION OF THE TENTH CHAPTER OF THE PROVERBS.

## CHAPTER X.

THE PARABLES OF SALOMON.

Vers. 1. *A wise sonne maketh a glad Father: but a foolish sonne is a heauinesse to his mother.*

*Parables.*] That is, wise and graue sentences written by *Salomon*, but inspired by the Spirit of God, for the information of the mind, and the institution of the life, according to the rules of Wisedome, Iustice, and Piety. The other nine Chapters being prefixed as a preface to these, contained a continued discourse, wherein the commendation of Wisedome, and the exhortations to many good duties were prosecuted with varietie of arguments: whereas in these that follow, for the most part, are set downe briefe sayings, every verse almost comprehending a whole point in it selfe, not growing vpon dependance of that which went before, nor ministring the occasion of that which commeth after. Yet sometimes it falleth out otherwise, and diuers verses together haue dependance one with another, as will appeare in some place of this present chapter. *A wise sonne*, that is, a vertuous and towardly sonne or daughter, *maketh a ioyfull father*, or mother: *and a foolish son*, that is, a sinful and vngracious child, *is an heauinesse*, and griefe to his mother or father: yet it is not without cause that the mo-

ther is rather put in the latter clause, than the father: for that sex is the weaker, and more impatient of such a crosse: and vsuallie contemptuous children bee bolder to contemne the mother then the father, as Chap.15.20. *A foolish man despiseth his mother*; as *Rebeccah* was more troubled with *Esau* then *Isaac* was: and very often the mothers by too much indulgence and fondnesse are meanes of their childrens vices; and so it is said, *A childe set at libertie maketh his mother ashamed*: Chap.29.15.

*Doct.* A good sonne makes a glad father.

The comfort or sorrow of parents standeth much in the behauiour of their children. This is euident by the example of *Iacobs* sonnes: whereof *Ioseph*, a gratious child, was neuer but a refreshing to him: but *Simeon*, and *Reuben*, and *Leui*, and most of the rest, by their sinfull actions did fill him with griefe and afflictions: and so had *Dauid* experience both waies, being pearced with sorrow on the one side, by the villanous practises and miserable ends of *Absolon* and *Ammon*: and abounding with ioy on the other side for the singular wisedome of *Salomon*.

*Reason.*

First, these affections doe proceede from the loue that godly parents doe beare vnto God, that thinking all too little that is done in his seruices, they haue now helpers euen out of their owne loines, that will ioyne with them in the same: and when they haue finished their course and ended their owne daies worke, yet the worke shall still bee continued by their posteritie. We see in humane affaires, that euerie good subiect will be glad to breede vp a sonne that will bee fit and able to serue his Soueraigne: and how can it then but cheere vp the hart and refresh the spirits of Christian fathers or mothers, to haue their children the Lords Souldiers, valiantly fighting his battailes against sinne and Satan, and that in their owne sight and presence? Euery good master, as was *Abraham*, will think it a benefit to haue his seruants to be the seruants of the Lord: and euerie Christian will gladly heare of godly men, in another familie, in another towne, in another countrie, in another kingdome; and therefore much more will religious parents be rauished with ioy to see with their owne eies the feare of God in

in their owne houſes, in their owne children, by the bleſſing of God vpon their owne gouernment and praiers: but they cannot but conceiue as great griefe by the ſinfulneſſe of impious children, which wholly caſt off the yoke of all holy obedience, that deſpight him whom they themſelues honor, & blaſpheme that name which they ſanctifie, and reiect that word which their ſoules doe liue by. The Prophets eyes guſhed out with riuers of waters, becauſe ſtrangers and aliants, and euen his verie enemies obſerued not the commandements of God: and therefore much more would he haue mourned when his owne ſons rebelled againſt them. Pſal. 119.136.

Secondly, loue to the people of God will worke gladneſſe, when faithfull men diſcerne their children to bee inclining to goodneſſe. For they are growing to bee fruitfull plants in the Lords orchard: and ſo, many ſhall haue profit by them many waies; where as the wicked are as thornes and bryars, and noyſome brambles. 2

Thirdly, the happy condition of gracious and godly children themſelues, doth procure to the parents much conſolatiõ: for beſides their ſpirituall promotion and dignitie, being made the ſonnes of God, and kingly heires of euerlaſting glory, the fauour and bleſſing of God doth vſually appeare towards them for the things of this life: when rebellious and wicked children haue the curſe of God vpon them, doing miſchiefe and hurt, and receiuing the reward of it by ſhame and infamie, by debts and areareages, by flight and lurking, by bonds and impriſonment, and oftentimes by an ignominious death and deſtruction. 3

Fourthly, wiſe children yeeld matter of comfort to their parents, in being officious vnto them, and vſing all good behauiour towards them: for they are moſt forward to obey their commandements, they are moſt cheerefull to relieue their neceſſities; they are moſt faithfull and prouident to preſerue their life, and health, and welfare. In which reſpect the Scripture compareth them to arrowes or any other weapons, whereby men may bee defended: Pſal. 127.4. And as they are preſt and readie to performe euery duty that is required of them: ſo will 4

they also carefully regard their parents dealings towards them: the father giueth counsell, and the sonne is directed by it: the father giueth rebuke, and the sonne trembleth at it: the father giueth correction, and the sonne doth humbly submit himselfe vnto it. Now at the hands of a foolish child what is to be expected but folly, contempt of commaundements and counsell, murmuring against admonition and reproofes, resistance against correction and chastisements? If their parents bee in want, they are ashamed of them, and thinke it an intolerable burthen to bee charged with them; and so shorten their daies by opprobrious and hard vsage: if they haue wealth, they seeke to make a spoile of them; if they bee like to leaue them patrimony or inheritance, no enemie doth so much desire their death; if they be simple, and want vnderstanding, they either vse contemptuously to checke and snib them, or else to mocke and deride them; if they declare their wisedome and true pietie, they shew their bitternesse against their godly zeale and sincere profession.

*Vse 1.*

Instruction. First, to children, to take it as a motiue to stirre them vp & prouoke them to Christian conuersation, That they shal minister comfort to their parents, & pleasure themselues, and please the Lord; for all those concurre and meete together in one. The sonne doth neuer giue iust occasion of gladnesse to his father, but hee hath a iust cause to bee glad for his owne sake; because God hath so seasoned him with grace, and made him acceptable to his friends, and vouchsafed vnto him his owne fauour: Whereas on the contrary side, when the parents are much grieued for the childes misdemeanors, the childe ought to bee more grieued for his owne wretchednesse; for he shall be most punished for his rebellion. Secondly, to parents; that forasmuch as their childrens vice or vertue, is their woe or welfare, therefore they doe their best indeuour to haue their seede to be vertuous and holy. And hee that will doe this, must lay the foundation of being a comfortable father, before hee bee a father, and take the way to haue good children before hee haue children: and that is by a due care that himselfe doe marrie in the Lord, that hee propose such an

*How a man may be a ioyfull father.*

end,

end, and vſe ſuch proceeding, and match with ſuch a wife, as will bring the bleſſing of God vpon his houſe and poſteritie. Secondly, if he be deſirous that his children ſhould yeelde him the crop of comfort, he muſt beſtow vpon them the ſeede of inſtruction, and the tillage of good education. Thirdly, great care is to be had for the wiſe and orderly diſpoſing of them in mariage, that all the former hopes be not cut off through the neglect of this duty. For diuers times good people in this regard are like to corn that proſpereth wel in the blade, but afterwards is either blaſted or withered in the eare. Many ingenious and towardly young men and maidens haue been vtterly ouerthrowne by coupling themſelues to prophane yokefellowes, and being ingrafted into ſinfull families.

Reproofe of thoſe that take leaſt care to get wiſedome for their children, but onely labour to prouide them wealth, and thereby they are made idle, and proud, and vnthrifty, and prepared to waſte with riot all that they haue gotten with care and trauell. And yet they be far worſe, and altogether vnworthy of the name of fathers, that grieue at the graces of the children, and reſtraine them from all the meanes whereby they might attaine vnto knowledge and wiſedome. 2

Conſolation to them that be inriched with this treaſure of good children, howſoeuer the world goeth with them in their ſtate otherwiſe. If they be wealthy and ſtored with poſſeſſions, they haue ſuch to leaue them vnto, as are fitted for them, and know how to vſe them, and are like long to inioy them: Whereas many parents do leaue portions that are better then the children to whom they are bequeathed: and the good creatures of God are put into the hands of vnworthy men, who are therefore vnable long to retaine them. If they bee poore and deſtitute of other riches and maintenance, yet the want of things of leſſe value is ſupplied by that which is of more worth, one good childe is better then many wedges of gold: and no earthly inheritance is ſo faire a demaines, as a religious ſeede which God doth giue in goodneſſe, and by his owne teſtimony commendeth, as a bleſſing that maketh a man to be happy: as hee ſaith, Pſ. 127. 3, 4. *As are the arrowes in the hand of a ſtrong man,* 3

*so are the children of youth. Blessed is the man that hath his quiuer full of them.*

Vers. 2. *The treasures of wickednesse profit nothing: but righteousnesse deliuereth from death.*

THe treasures of wickednesse.] That is, the greatest abundance of wealth which is euill gotten, and euill vsed, or possessed by an euill owner, *profit nothing*: doe him no good at any time; but least of all at his death, or in time of misery; for so it is intended by the *Antithesis*, & expressed, Chap. 11.14. *Riches auaile not in the day of wrath, but righteousnesse*; that is, vprightnesse of heart, and holinesse of behauiour, *deliuereth from death*; that is, from destruction, and all other hurtfull dangers. Yet not by any merit of man, but by the mercy of God through Iesus Christ.

*Doct.* Wicked mens wealth doth them no good.

*The riches of iniquity.*] No wicked worldling is any thing the better for his wealth: which thing the Prophet *Dauid* had well considered of, and therefore confidently affirmeth, Psal. 39.6. *Doubtlesse* (saith hee) *man walketh by a vaine image, he heapeth vp riches, and cannot tell who shall gather them.* He speaketh not of a particular, as though some one man were falne into that errour, but of the whole body of mankinde, in that case as they are descended from *Adam*. Euery man that hath nothing but the nature of man doth take a shew for a substance, the image in the glasse, for the face represented by it: the picture of happinesse which is painted on riches, for true and solide felicitie: and therefore they misse of that which they make most account of. For they haue gathered together goods, and others shall gather the good comfort and fruit of them: and whether they haue prouided for their owne, or for aliants, for friends or for foes, they are altogether vncertaine.

Luk. 12.15. But if it be said, that thus far it profiteth them to be wealthy, that they eate and drinke, and liue thereby: our Sauiour answereth, that no mans life consisteth in the abundance of his riches: doe not poore men liue also? are not sheepe, and kine, and all other cattell nourished?

*Obiect.* But they fare better then others; and in that respect they

they haue a commoditie in their wealth aboue others.

*Anſwere.* But better fare doth not make their ſtate better: it helpeth not their health, it ſweeteneth not their ſleepe, it refreſheth not their harts, it furthereth them to no good ſeruice. That meate doth a man good which inciteth him to prayer, and thankfulneſſe, which mooueth him to compaſſion and mercie, and maketh him able and readie to exerciſe euery good dutie in his calling. Eccleſ. 5.11.

Firſt, the ſtore and plentie of riches and poſſeſſions doth nothing helpe the ſtate of vnrighteous men in the time of their proſperitie; for that which they haue is none of their owne: they haue neither right nor vſe of any thing that is about them, Iſai. 61.5. They plow other mens grounds, and plant other mens orchards, and keepe other mens cattel, and become other mens drudges. For ſo to the comfort of his people doth the Lord himſelfe profeſſe, who appointeth to euery one his taske, and deſtinateth his worke to the purpoſe of his owne will: *The ſtrangers ſhall ſtand and feede your ſheepe, and the ſonnes of ſtrangers ſhall be your plowmen, and dreſſers of your vines*, Iſai. 61.5. *Reaſ.*1. Iſai. 61.5.

And for this cauſe the Prophet *Habaccuk* doth crie out ſhame vpon their follie, when they thinke themſelues to bee very wiſe and prudent: *Ho, he that increaſeth that which is not his, and he that ladeth himſelfe with thicke clay.* They make themſelues pack-horſes, or at leaſt ſeruile porters which bow their backes to other mens burdens; and ſhall be recompenſed only with feeling the weight of the ſame. Or let the beſt be made of it, and be it their owne, yet their owne is nothing but a loade of heauie morter. And this were well, if this were all: but the worſt remaineth to bee ſpoken of, namelie, their burdens of wicked treaſures bee as it were bags or purſes obtained by ſtealth, or robberie, which will therefore bring their liues into perill. Hab. 2.6.

Secondly, the abundance of outward things cannot ſuccour them in the time of their calamitie: for ſo the Prophet threatneth; *Neither their ſiluer nor their gold ſhall bee able to deliuer them in the day of the Lords wrath:* Zeph. 1.18. If their danger grew from the heate of mens wrath, there might bee hope that

wealth

wealth would helpe them: for either a ſumme of mony would quench the flame of the aduerſaries diſpleaſure, or kindle courage in ſome others to defend them. But not that God is prouoked againſt them, it is in vaine to offer gold or ſiluer to pacifie him, or to ranſome themſelues; for hee ſtandeth in no Pſalm.49.7. neede of them, hee admireth them not as men doe, and they be his alreadie, and at his owne will to bee diſpoſed of. Then to oppoſe them againſt him, in way of reſiſtance, it were abſurd: for there is no power in them to doe vs good without Pſal.62.10.11 him: and much leſſe therefore to maintaine any man againſt him. Nay they bee ſo farre from aiding ſinfull men againſt the hand of God, as that they bee many times weapons in their hands to plague them with ſtroakes of iudgement. It hath neuer been heard that the purſe hath preſerued the man from the ſword of the robber, or the cheſt from the aſſault of the theeſe: but the contrarie falleth out often, that men bee made a ſpoile for their monie, and brought to ruine; as a tree that hath great bowes and a little roote is ouerturned in a mightie tempeſt. But then eſpecially doth wealth bring woe to wicked men, when God awaketh their conſciences, to behold their owne crueltie and falſehood, and the heauie puniſhment now readie to be inflicted vpon them for the ſame. This was *Iudas* his caſe, and ſuch the Prophet ſpeakes of, Ezech.7.19. *They ſhall caſt their ſiluer into the ſtreetes, and their gold ſhall be caſt afarre off.* That which was deareſt to their hearts before, and brought them to ſinne, they remoue furtheſt from them now, when they feele the ſorrow of it. And beſides this, although riches had ſome greater vertue, and power in themſelues, yet they could ſtand vngodly men in no ſtead, becauſe they ceaſe when miſerie beginneth: when death commeth to men, and they come before the iudgement ſeate of Chriſt, the wicked haue horrible ſorrowes and terrors vpon them, and all their wealth and ſubſtance is fled from them.

This their ſtate is foreſhewne in the Scriptures, as euidentlie as if it were preſent, or a thing paſt, ſeene perfectlie accompliſhed in euery point. For ſo the Apoſtle witneſſeth in the re- Reue.6.15.16 uelation: *The Kings of the earth, and the rich men, and the chiefe Captaines*

*Captaines, and the mightie men, and euerie bondman, and euery free man, hid themſelues in dennes, and among the rockes of the mountaines, and ſaid to the mountaines and rocks, fall on vs, and hide vs from the preſence of him that ſitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the lambe.*

Deſtruction. That we neuer corrupt our hearts or peruert our waies to increaſe our eſtate, and augment our wealth. This maketh a wound, but miniſtreth no plaiſter to heale it. It will aſſuredly bring trouble and affliction, but neuer any ſtrength and abilitie, either to preuent or to beare it. And therefore it ſhall be our wiſedome to foreſee the euents that will enſue vpon any vnlawful courſe of gaining. We would not willinglie enter into an houſe viſited with the peſtilence though great cheere were prouided for vs. We would not put on infectious apparrell though they were made of ſilke or ſatten, or ſtuffes that were deareſt. And ſhall we be more prouident for the bodie then for the ſoule? Nay, for bodie ſinglie, more then for bodie and ſoule together? Nay for meere bodie, more then for bodie and ſoule, and ſtate, and name, and ſeede and poſteritie? For, iniquitie will bring a curſe vpon all theſe, and goods preſerue not one of them.

Terror to the wicked that thriue by iniuſtice, as vſurie, oppreſſion, or any indirect meanes of getting. Euery good man may ſay of them, as *Iob* did ſay in the like caſe: *Let the counſell of the wicked be farre from me:* their candle will bee put out, and deſtruction will come vpon them, vnleſſe they breake off their iniuſtice. All their commoditie is to them, as the bait vnto the fiſh, with the hooke: as the corne that is ſcattered for the birds vnder the net, and as the ſweete ſops that are ſet for the rats with poiſon. Iob 21.16.

*But righteouſneſſe, &c.*] The goodneſſe of a Chriſtian will worke him that happineſſe which no outward goods could euer procure. This was the meſſage that *Habbacuk* was to deliuer to the people of God, to confirme them againſt the dangerous inuaſion of the Babylonians, That the righteous ſhould liue by his faith. It is oppoſed to the proud conceites of the wicked on both ſides. The high minded Chaldeans intended to *Doct.* 2. A Chriſtian mans happines conſiſteth in his grace, not in his goods. Hab 2.4.

destroy all, and the stubborne hearted Iewes presumed to escape all destruction. Now the Lord shewed that neither side of them should haue their wils. For the faithfull should bee deliuered from death, or the euill of it, notwithstanding all the power and weapons of the Babylonians. And onely the faithfull had assurance of happie deliuerance, notwithstanding all the armour and riches of the Israelites.

*Reas.* 1. First, the efficacie of the Spirit, and the merit of Christ doth free them from the first death, and giue them a part in the first resurrection. For the state of the Ephesians is for this purpose proposed, that it may be a paterne of the condition of all other Christians: *You hath he quickned that were dead in trespasses and sinnes*, Ephes. 2. 1.

2 Secondlie, the prouidence and power of God doth shield them from the hurtfull sword, which would bring them to an vntimely end. And they can at all times open heauen gates by the key of prayer, and haue accesse to God in all distresses. *Haman* was stored with riches, and aduanced to dignitie, and backed with great friends: and yet on a sodaine with the turning of an hand, his life, and power, and whole estate was ouerturned. And *Mordecay* was a poore man, a captiue, maligned and condemned, and came so neere to the iawes of death, that after a sort it breathed vpon him: yet being a righteous man, and crying to the Lord, he obtained a glorious deliuerance. *Iehosaphat* seemed to be in as great perill as *Ahab*, and *Ahab* was of as great wealth as *Iehosaphat*, yet God gaue direction to the hand of one archer, vnwittingly to shoote, and to the arrow to light vpon him, and to finde a chinke in his armor, and to hit him in such a place, as thorow which it pearced to his life. And contrariwise hee perswaded the hearts of manie others, who pressed vpon *Iehosaphat* to withdraw their hands, and to let him alone in safetie.

Thirdly, the death of Iesus Christ hath so plucked out the sting, and taken away the venome of their naturall death, as that it is conuerted into a quiet and comfortable rest.

Fourthly, the Resurrection of Iesus Christ shall at the last day subdue and destroy this death, that now holdeth their bo-

die

dies in the graue, and death ſhall die, and they ſhall liue in immortalitie and euerlaſting bleſſednes.

Inſtruction to euery one to get a ſure poſſeſſion of ſound and vnfained righteouſneſſe, ſuch as will hold weight in the ballance of Gods righteouſneſſe, before his iudgement ſeate: and therefore let him obſerue theſe three generall rules which be effectuall and neceſſarie. Firſt, that he put off the old man, with the carnall reaſon and ſhewes thereof: diſclaiming, for authentick and allowable goodnes, all counterfeit, naturall and ciuill vertues, and bee clothed with Chriſt and his merits, and ſanctified with his holy Spirit, Phil. 3. 9. 10. Secondly, that hee make a narrow ſearch to finde out all his ſinnes, and that with godly ſorrow and repentance for the ſame: obtaining alſo pardon and remiſſion for them, through the blood of Ieſus Chriſt. Thirdly, that he make a conſcience, conſtantly, and totally to walke in the commandements of God, endeuoring to pleaſe him in all things. For hee that leaueth off well dooing in the end, ſhall loſe all the comfort of his beginning. And he that is content to ſerue God but in a part, may bee ſuſpected to ſerue him ſoundly in no part. *Vſe* 1.

Conſolation to them that haue attained to this righteouſneſſe, and bee furniſhed with it, in heart and behauiour: they are thorowlie armed not onelie with the breſtplate, but with the whole and complete armour of God, againſt Satan and all his forces. And ſo likewiſe are they in ſafetie from the perill of all places; the violence of all perſons, and the terrors of all times and ſeaſons. When they are in health they needе not to feare ſickneſſe: when they are ſicke, they needе not to feare death: when they are to die, they needе not to dreade the danger of damnation. 2

Verſ. 3. *The Lord will not famiſh the ſoule of the righteous: but he caſteth away the ſubſtance of the wicked.*

THeſe words bee inferred vpon the former, as an anſwer to a ſecret obiection, that might be made againſt them: Why ſhould it bee thought that men get no good by gathering ri-

ches in what manner soeuer? They stand them in steade in time of dearth and scarsity; when others that want them, though neuer so iust, are like to perish. Nowhere hee sheweth the case to bee otherwise. Good men are not vnprouided of foode because they are vnfurnished with wealth: and sinfull men haue no assurance of prouision though they haue riches: *for the Lord will not famish the soules of the righteous*, that is, will not suffer the men themselues to starue, though they haue neuer so little: *But will cast away the substance of the wicked*, that is, hee will depriue them of the possession, or vse, or vertue of it when they are in greatest neede.

*Doct.* A poore Christian better then a rich worldling.

*The Lord will not*, &c.] Poore Christians bee in better estate then wealthie wicked men, euen in respect of bodily prouision and maintenance. Such a comparison is made, Psalm.34.10. that *Lions*, that is, mightie, strong, and boysterous men *suffer hunger, and sustaine want* (as was notablie seene in the case of *Nabuchadnezzer*, who in the midst of his greatest power, his ample dominions, and large possessions, was yet turned a grazing like a beast, amongst the beasts): *But they that seeke the Lord shall want nothing that is good.* They may sometimes bee without that which they wish for, because they may wish for that which will not well agree with their safetie. But whatsoeuer is good, and their neede requireth it, that shall vndoubtedly be ministred vnto them.

*Obiect.* But may not a godly man die of hunger? shall wee condemne all that are affamished?

*Answ.* There is no doubt but manie men, euen faithfull seruants of God in sieges, and extreame dearths &c. be brought to their ends, through penurie and want of food: but then it is good for them so to come to their end. The Lord doth call them home to heauen by such a messenger. In the like sense it is said in the former Psalm.34.20. *That not one of their bones is broken*, that is, to their hurt, or through neglect of Gods prouident care ouer them. But one may haue his bones broken, and be hewed or sawed asunder, in great mercie, *Heb.*11.37. So there is a promise to Gods people to preserue them from the pestilence, *Psal.*91.7. and yet many blessed saints bee taken away

away by it to euerlasting glorie. Else *Dauid* would not haue giuen them that testimony, who so died at that time, calling them poore harmelesse sheep; or haue offred himselfe to that kind of death to preserue them aliue. The meaning is then, that religious men shall neuer be plagued with the venome and sting of scarcitie and famine, hauing it executed as a curse vpon them; as it falleth out with sinners.

First, they haue the good prouidence of God continually for them: his eyes are open to see their neede, his eares are open to heare their prayers, his hand is open to relieue their necessities, his treasurie and rich store-house is open and able to supply all their wants. They haue his loue and fauour, they haue his power and sufficiencie, they haue his word and promise, they haue his truth and fidelitie, that hee will neuer faile them, Heb. 13. 5. *Reason* 1.

Secondly, the wealthy misers of the world haue the hand of God against them, to consume that which they haue augmented, to scatter that which they haue gathered together, and to cast away that as a cursed thing, which they haue laid vp as a precious treasure. They trust not in him, but make that their hope; and therefore hee will make that to deceiue them when they haue greatest neede of helpe. They doubt not but it shall goe well with them, when others be in extreamitie; and therefore they shall bee brought into straits, when it shall goe well with others. And so much the rather, because they doe not onely glory in their wealth, and lift vp themselues aboue poore Christians; but arme themselues therewith, and make it a weapon of oppression. 2

Consolation to good men that haue inward store of grace, though their outward state of money, or other substance bee very slender and small: And though their friends should also faile as well as their wealth, yet they bee neither destitute of friendship or welfare. Because the Lord himselfe is all-sufficient in himselfe, and most neerely vnited, and knit vnto them by the bond of fatherhood. The Prophet professed and published his assurance to all the world, that hee *should want nothing*; in this regard, that *God was his sheepheard*. Psal. 23. 1. And *Vse* 1.

how can hee possibly then bee forlorne, that hath him to his father? Euen wicked men will be tender of their children, and the Beares and Dragons will bee carefull of their young ones: *Lament.* 4. 3. and shall the God of all goodnesse withdraw his hand to helpe his sonnes and daughters? especially sithence he reacheth it out to minister foode to euery liuing creature, and amongst them to his very enemies? and from his owne kindnesse, he can bow mens affections to be kinde, and make their very enemies friends, and friendly vnto them. And let that fall out that the times should bee hard, and the prices of victuals high, yet Gods store is not diminished, nor his plenty abated; but he can afford his family sufficient allowance, as well in the deareſt yeares, as when things bee at the cheapest. And then indeed his prouidence is most seene, and his goodnesse most felt, and the truth of his word most cleerely manifested. For so he promiseth, Psal. 37. 19. *They shall not be confounded in the perilous times, and in the daies of famine they shall haue enough.* Whereof *Iacob* had experience in a speciall maner: he neuer fared better then in the yeares of dearth: when all others wanted, he abounded: when the Egyptians themselues that sowed the corne were ready to perish for want of corne, he with his household was plenteously prouided for amongst them, and that for nothing.

Terror for them whose whole happinesse doth hang on their riches; though they be full now, they may quickely bee emptied: and though they seeme to want nothing, the curse of God may speedily bring them to bee destitute of euery thing. So did *Mary* sing by the Spirit of God in her song of reioycing, Luke 1. 53. *He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he hath sent empty away.* And so did *Hanna* also praise the Lord for the same, 1. Sam. 2. 5. *They that were full, are hired forth for bread, and the hungry are no more hired.* A great alteration was made in their states on both sides. The poore which laboured in other mens worke for wages, were sufficiently prouided for at home, and the rich and wealthy which were masters ouer many, were compelled by neede to frame themselues to be other mens seruants.

Verſ. 4. *A deceitfull hand maketh poore: but the hand of the diligent maketh rich.*

THis verſe alſo containeth an anſwer to an other obiection, which might riſe out of the wordes immediately going before. If food and maintenance be the gift of God, and they that haue little ſhall be kept from want, & they that haue great ſtore ſhall be ſtript of all; to what end ſhould men trauaile and take paines? the wiſeſt way is to giue ouer all labour. Now this he refuteth by ſhewing the meanes whereby righteous men vſe to receiue this food and prouiſion from Gods hand, and that is by ſedulity and diligence in their vocations. And therefore he demonſtrateth the contrary effects of contrary men; namely, of ſlothfull perſons, and ſuch as bee induſtrious and painefull. Slothfull perſons fall into two euils: the one is the practiſe of deceitfulneſſe, called here a deceitful hand: the other is the burthen of pouerty, which is a puniſhment inflicted vpon them both for fraud and idleneſſe. They that be diligent haue their reward yeelded vnto them, that they thriue and proſper by the labour of their hands: and though their wealth be not ſo great in quantity, yet the ſmalneſſe thereof is recompenſed in qualitie and good vſe of it; and therefore is called, *precious riches*, Chap. 12. 27. And ſo they haue neither neede nor diſpoſition to giue themſelues to deceitfull ſhifts, as ſluggards.

*A deceitfull hand*, &c.] Falſe dealing is no profitable trade to gaine by, it rather hurteth then helpeth them that vſe it. Tending to this purpoſe are many Parables in this booke: as Chap. 13. 11. *The riches of vanitie ſhall bee diminiſhed*: they may be gotten, but not long kept, and though they periſh not, nor bee taken away all at once, yet they will conſume and bee waſted by degrees. And as this euent is heere declared to come vpon euill gotten goods; ſo in an other place hee telleth the miſerie that ſhall ouertake the men themſelues that ſo fiſh for them: Chap. 19. 15. *A deceitfull perſon ſhall be affamiſhed*. As wealth will forſake them, ſo friends will faile them, and God will curſe them, and pouertie will oppreſſe them.

*Doct.* Guiles bring no gaine.

Firſt,

*Reasons.* 1. First, the Lord doth hate and curse both deceit and deceiuers, as being abomination vnto him: and therefore his displeasure will kindle a fire in their estate to consume them.

2 Secondly, consider from whence very often this deceitfulnesse proceedeth: from idlenesse and remisnesse of men in their callings; as many texts do testifie, and the *Antithesis* especially and opposition in the two places before alleadged. Now if single slouthfulnes of it selfe will so eate vp a mans estate, as heereafter is to be shewed; much more when it hath such a companion to take part with it. And for experience hereof, looke vpon gamesters, and couseners, and shifters, and all such kind of people, and see whether their owne negligence and vniust courses, doe not like hungry and greedy beasts, deuour and swallow vp all their portions.

3 Thirdly, it is a righteous thing with God, so to requite them with penurie, that by fraud and falshood seeke to bring other men to it.

*Vse* 1. Instruction. If we be visited with beggery or needinesse, (the burthen of pouerty pressing vs so heauily that we cannot well beare it) let vs examine our owne courses, and call our waies to account, to see whether our owne fraud and guile haue not brought such a guest to our houses: and so doing, we shall turne the poison vnto a medicine, and that which is to others a iudgement, may bee to vs a singular mercy to draw vs to repentance, from such vnrighteous behauiour.

2 Secondly, we be yet spared from the stroak of God, that he hath not arrested our substance, being forfaited by falshood, nor depriued vs of the same. Let vs then speedily preuent the punishment by breaking off the sinne by repentance, by mercy, by reformation and restitution to the right owners, so far as possibly we shall be able.

3 Reproofe of their folly which hope to inrich themselues by deceit and wrongfull dealing, trusting to rise by that which bringeth others to a fall, and to turne that to a gaine, which is to others a losse. But by triall they shall bee taught, that they may as well looke to thriue by vnthriftinesse, as to increase their stocke by deceite, or profit themselues by rapine, and wrong

wrong doing.

*Obiect.* But it appeareth, that their succesſe is correſpondent to their expectation, the euent proueth that they make a gaine of it. The Prophet teſtifieth, that, *As a cage is full of birds, ſo their houſes are ful of deceit, and thereby they are become great, and waxen rich.* Ierem. 5. 27.

*Anſwere.* They may get things into their hands, and yet be preuented of the fruition of them. They may haue them for a time, and loſe them at the laſt, as the ſame Rropher alſo teacheth: *As the Patridge gathereth,* or *laieth egges, and hatcheth not: ſo he that getteth riches, and not by right, ſhall leaue them in the middeſt of his daies, and in the end die like a foole.* Ierem. 17. 11. They haue not a broode of comforts, ſo ſoone as they ſit vpon their neſt of riches, they may be troden vpon, or addle, or eaten vp. Euill may befall them before they can doe them any good; or if their goods remaine, themſelues may ſoone be remooued from their goods: and in the meane time haue the curſe of God on ſoule and bodie, which is much more grieuous, then to be ſmitten in outward eſtate.

*But the hand of the diligent,* &c.] They greatly help their owne eſtate that are painefull and faithfull in their vocations. Among many teſtimonies whereby this point is confirmed, that is to be noted which is in the thirteenth Chapter of this booke; *The ſoule of the diligent ſhall haue plentie,* or *bee made fat,* as the word ſignifieth. Where though by ſoule he vnderſtandeth the whole man, yet that part is not named in vaine. Their bodie and outward man ſhall haue enough, and the ſoule and inward man ſhall be content and ſatisfied with enough, and much refreſhed by it. *Doct.* A man faithfull in his calling betters his eſtate. Prou. 13. 4.

Firſt, it is appoinred to man by the decree of God, not onely as a dutie to trauell and labour, but alſo as a portion *to eate his bread* thereby, and enioy the fruit of his labour, Gen. 3. 19. Pſalm. 128. 2. *Reaſon* 1.

Secondly, diligence and painefulneſſe is a ſeruice to God, and they that here haue the promiſe made to them, are ſuch as performe their works in conſcience, and obedience to his will, and therefore may well be aſſured of allowance to maintaine 2

them. As for ſuch as worke for the worlds ſake, in pride, and couetouſneſſe, or vpon coaction and neceſſitie, or for any other ſiniſter reſpect, they may bee ſaid to bee great doers that meddle in much dealing, but nothing diligent: and therefore it is no meruaile, though all their toile and trauell doe ſeldome take any good effect.

3 Thirdly, their paines and labours are for the common good, they ſerue for the vſe and profit of mankind, (for they that ſpinne the ſpiders web, and are more buſie then well occupied, are not to be counted in the number of theſe) and therefore ſhall not faile of the benefit of it themſelues.

4 Fourthly, faithfull imployment, and paines taking is a medicine againſt pride, and helpeth to worke humilitie, and therfore maketh readie the way for all good proſperitie.

5 Fiftly, by this meanes they are kept from vicious companions, and ſinfull exerciſes, and all kind of ſuch vnthrifty courſes, as whereby the ſtates of many men come to vtter ruine and ouerthrow.

*Vſe.* Inſtruction to all degrees from the higheſt that ſitteth on the throne, vnto the loweſt that cleanſeth the chanels, or grindeth at the mil, that euery one attend with heedefulneſſe to the duties of his calling without remiſneſſe or negligence. Art thou great, and ſubſtantiall, as wee vſe to ſay? take this way to increaſe thy greatneſſe, and inlarge thy ſubſtance; and as the multitude of riches and titles doe not diminiſh thy liking and eſtimation of them, ſo let it not abate thy induſtrie and diligence in any ſeemely ſeruices. And thou which art poore, and of inferiour place, let it not repent thee to trauaile in works that others peraduenture would diſdaine to exerciſe, but proceede in hope, and know for thy comfort, that *in all labour there is abundance*, Chap.14.23. And albeit now thou art at the commandement of others, and according to their willes art wholly vſed in their workes, yet remember that *the hand of the diligent ſhall beare rule*, Chap.12.24. From a ſeruant thou maieſt grow to bee a maſter, from a labourer or hireling, thou maieſt attaine to bee an officer, and haue others at thy commandement. But whatſoeuer thy ſtate prooue to bee amongſt men, aſſure

aſſure thy ſelfe of the reward of inheritance from God, *for thou ſerueſt the Lord Chriſt*: Col. 3. 24.

Verſ. 5. *He that gathereth in ſummer is a ſonne of vnderſtanding: and he that ſleepeth in harueſt is a ſonne of confuſion.*

THe driſt of theſe words is to teach men to redeeme the time, and make the beſt aduantage of the ſeaſons, comparing opportunitie to ſummer or harueſt, when the fruits of the earth are ripe, and readie to be gathered; and the perſons to whom it is offered, to husbandmen that haue commodities growing in the fields. And therefore as we iudge him prudent which ſo ſtirreth himſelf, and haſteneth his people to cut down his corne, and to inne it when it is ripe, and the weather is ſeaſonable: ſo God here calleth him a ſonne of vnderſtanding, that is, a wiſe man, which taketh time while time ſerueth, for anie good purpoſe and occaſion. And as the world crieth, fie on him that ſleepeth in harueſt, that is, doth no more labour or looke to his affaires, then if hee were in a dead ſleepe, and ſo ſuſtaineth the loſſe of all his croppe, by meanes whereof hee ouerthroweth the ſtate of all his familie: ſo the Lord termeth him a ſonne of confuſion, or which bringeth confuſion, that is to ſay, miſery and ſhame vpon himſelfe and his friends, which ſtriueth not to take his part of Gods bleſſing in due ſeaſon.

It is a matter of great importance to make our vſe of a good opportunitie when it is offered. The example of the *Ant* is to that end propoſed, Chap. 6. 6. that we might learne of the vnreaſonable creatures, and thoſe which are alſo of no account and reckoning. They are led onely by ſenſe, and inſtinct of nature; wee haue reaſon that may perſwade to it; they haue none to giue them admonition, or to call vpon them: we haue guides to direct vs, and the word of God ſeriouſlie inſtructing vs in the dutie. And that is there commended in them, which incomparablie will be more effectuall in Chriſtians: namelie, that wiſedome ſupplieth the defect of ſtrength, and prouidence effecteth that which other things cannot bring to paſſe by their power. *Doct.* Opportunitie not to be omitted.

Examples hereof we haue in *Ioseph*, who in the time of great plentie, prouided against the yeeres of scarcitie: and in the Church of Antiochia, who being foretold of the famine to come, made prouision before hand for the Saints of Ierusalem.

*Reas.* 1. First, it is a thing pleasing to God, to accept of his gifts when his gratious hand doth reach them out vnto vs: and very offensiue to him when wee put by the fauour and kindnesse that he maketh offer of. For hee taketh it, either as a contempt of the things which he would bestow: or as a controlment of his wisedome; as though hee did not see farre enough into the fitnesse of euery season.

2 Secondly, the euents that fall out on both sides doe make this manifest: they that open their hands to receiue, when God openeth his to giue, they that are prepared to accept with thankefulnesse, as he is readie to bestow in mercie, such shall haue the blessings of God confirmed vnto them with new blessings: and to them will hee communicate much and often, and that which is excellent, which giue speedie entertainment to his graces. But on the other side, when men hold him off with delaies, and grow nice and coye, and turne his benefits backe vpon him, they shall be soone rid of them, and stript of all his mercies: they shall call and crie at another time, and haue no answere, they shall search and seeke, and finde no successe, they shall feele their wants, and faile of supplie to relieue them.

*Vse* 1. Reproofe of them that be euill husbands for themselues, in the things of this present life, pretermitting the precious time of getting skill in any profitable trade or science, and onelie learne the art of vanitie, and bee many yeeres apprentices to dogs, and dice, and hawkes, and boules, and to euery ruffianlie companion, that shall teach them to swagger, and sweare, to swill, and quaffe, and play all the parts of professed Atheists. And so at last (their wits being worne out for want of wisedome, which would haue preserued them, their strength consumed in striuing to doe mischiefe, and age perishing in them as neuer yeelding fruit to themselues, or any others) they come

to that condition as did the Vagabonds that *Iob* ſpeaketh of, that euery man will be readie to preferre his dogs before them (as in equitie it is fit for the maſter to take the better hand of the ſeruant) and to let his very dunghill haue preeminence aboue them. Their wretched and curſed courſes in miſſpending their time doe worke them the fulneſſe of woe and miſerie, and make them odious and hatefull to God and godly men, and to ciuill men, and burthenous and loathſome to vngodly and ſinfull men. Secondly, of them that be vnthriftie for their ſoules, 2
which neuer applie themſelues to prepare for another life, before they be departing out of this. They doe not once thinke of ſeeking heauen and euerlaſting ſaluation, vntill they bee ſinking into hell and perpetuall perdition. They imagine that earthly things will require long labour to compaſſe them, but pietie, and grace, repentance, and faith, may be gotten in a moment: they be readie at their will, and their will will be flexible to their wiſh, and neither abilitie, nor will, nor wiſh will bee wanting at the time of their deaths. Oh miſerable men, how long will their eies be blinded! How long will their hearts be hardned! Doe they not perceiue that ſinne and Satan haue power ouer their affections and deſires, and purpoſes, and will, and all the faculties of their whole ſoules? Euen this maketh it cleare that it is ſo, becauſe they doe not perceiue it to bee ſo. And if their ſoules bee in ſuch bondage and ſubiection, and held at the wil of the diuel, that now in their freſh age & health (their ſenſes being more capable of inſtruction, and the miniſtery of the word readie to yeeld inſtruction) they cannot attaine to ſound and godly ſorrow, and conuerſion: let them not deceiue themſelues, as though in ſickneſſe, and paine, and dotage, and ſenſeleſneſſe, and affected blindnes of minde, they can by their owne diſpoſition returne ſincerely to the Lord.

Verſ.6. *Bleſſings are vpon the head of the righteous: but iniquity ſhall couer the mouth of the wicked.*

BLeſſings.] That is, all kind of happineſſe, euery good gift of God that is fit for them, as peace, plenty, grace, & health,

&c. All shall be vpon the head of the righteous: meaning vpon the whole soule and body of euery faithfull holy man. And they are said to bee on the head, because they come downe from aboue, and light as it were vpon the head, and so descend to the other parts. But iniquitie, the vengeance of God executed for violence and sinne, shall couer the mouth of the wicked, shall take away all excuses & defences from him. Now here is somewhat vnderstood in the former clause, and expressed in the latter: and somewhat vnderstood in the latter, and supplied in the former. Blessings are vpon the head of the righteous, and therefore doe open his mouth, *viz.* to praise God, and maintaine his owne innocency, and iudgements (called here violence or iniquity, by a *metonymie* of the cause) they are vpon the head of the wicked, and so close vp their mouth.

*Doct.* 1. Blessednesse is the greatest gift of God to his seruants.

*Blessings* &c.] The greatest reward that God doth giue to his seruants in this life, is to blesse them. That is very ordinary with the Prophets in the Psalmes, and other places of Scripture, in wishing well to the Church, to pray for this, and in gratulations to commend it, and in thankfulnesse to God to acknowledge it. As in the fift Psalme, verse 12. desiring the comfort and ioy of faithfull men, and praying the Lord to worke it in them, he sheweth what iust cause they had to be so affected: *For thou Lord* (saith he) *wilt blesse the righteous, and with fauour wilt compasse him as with a shield.*

*Reas.* 1. First, such blessings as are here spoken of, be sure testimonies of Gods loue, and proceede meerely from his gracious goodnesse: they are infallible pledges of his fauour; as it appeareth in the words of the Psalme last quoted.

2 Secondly, they bee prerogatiues peculiarly appropriated to godly men: for saith he in an other place; *Saluation belongeth to the Lord, and thy blessing is vpon thy people.* It is alwaies accompanied with saluation: none are blessed but such as are saued; and none are either blessed or saued, but such as are the people of God.

3 Thirdly, they haue all good things infolded in them, which readilie according to our neede are ministred vnto vs: Deut. 28.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, Gods bleſſings doe ſeaſon all proſperitie and the gifts that it bringeth, and maketh them comfortable; and all aduerſity, and maketh it profitable: whereas the curſe doth poiſon both to the wicked. 4

Inſtruction. That whereas we deſire to haue the Lord powre this heauenly gift vpon vs; ſo let vs obſerue the conditions that he doth preſcribe to them which ſhall receiue it. Let vs get holineſſe into our hearts, and bleſſings cannot chuſe but bee vpon our heads: let righteouſneſſe haue place in our actions and behauiour, and peace will haue force in our ſoules and bodies. *Vſe* 1.

Conſolation to all true hearted Chriſtians, that haue this bleſſed gift of Gods bleſſing. He that may truely be ſaid to poſſeſſe the bleſſing, cannot poſſibly ſay how much he doth poſſeſſe: The varietie of his treaſure is vnſpeakeable; his ſubſtance exceedeth all eſtimation; his inheritance is endleſſe, and without all bounds and limits. Though we ſhould be as much moleſted with malitious men as *Dauid* and *Paul* were, and as much aſſaulted by Satan and tried by Gods owne hand, with loſſes or bodily infirmities, as *Iob* was; yet if wee be bleſſed of God as they were, what cauſe can there be of feare, or griefe, or diſcontentment? The bleſſing bringeth ſtrength for ſupportance in them; the bleſſing bringeth iſſue and deliuerance out of them; the bleſſing worketh the right vſe of them; the bleſſing yeeldeth a plentifull reward of comfort, and good proſperitie in this life, and of glory and euerlaſting happineſſe in the life to come. 2

When God entreth into iudgement with wicked men, hee will cauſe the plague ſo to manifeſt their ſinnes, that they ſhall not bee able to denie them. Though hypocrites can make the greateſt ſhew, and vſually bee moſt forward to ſpeake for themſelues; yet when God found out the diſſembler in the Goſpell, and called him to a reckoning for intruding himſelfe to his feaſt without a wedding garment, he was ſtricken dumbe and ſpeechleſſe, he could plead nothing for himſelfe. *Haman* ſtanding onely before the miniſter of Gods vengeance, hauing been before that time his greateſt friend, yet when *Hester* accuſed *Doct.* 2. Wicked mens ſin ſhall bring them to ſhame. Mat. 22. 12. Heſt. 7. 8.

cuſed him of his falſe and cruell practiſes, hee ſtood mute and could not reply. He that attempted to ſtop the mouth of *Mordecai*, had his own mouth ſtopped with his violence. And therefore when God himſelfe commeth to indite men, and to *ſet their ſinnes in order before them, all mouthes ſhall be ſtopped*, and *all the world ſhall be culpable before him*. No ſinfull and vnregenerate perſon, which hath no right to plead Chriſts merits, can poſſibly ſpeake any thing to iuſtifie himſelfe.

Pſal. 50. 21. Rom. 3. 19.

*Reaſ.* 1. Firſt, that the Lord may haue his words verified to bee all true and righteous, and his dealings alſo iuſt and holy: Pſalm. 51. 4. And for this cauſe, howſoeuer ſinfull men haue their mouthes ſhut vp at his iudgements, that they can ſay nothing for themſelues; yet he doth ſometimes open their mouthes, to draw out a confeſſion againſt themſelues; as in the caſe of *Iudas*, and *Pharao*, and *Adonibezek*. Matth. 27. 4. Exod. 9. 27 Iudg. 1. 7.

2 Secondly, in regard of the elect ſinners, that ſeeing the ſinne and puniſhment mixed together, and themſelues guiltie of the one, and worthy of the other, they may bee humbled and driuen to repentance. So were *Ioſephs* brethren frighted and brought to make this confeſſion; *What ſhall we ſpeake? and how ſhall we iuſtifie our ſelues? God hath found out the wickedneſſe of thy ſeruants*: Gen. 44. 16.

3 Thirdly, it maketh the torments of the reprobate to bee exceeding fearefull and terrible.

4 Fourthly, it is for admonition to others to take heed by their examples. This hath *Zachary*, chap. 1. 4, 5, 6, &c. *Be not like your fathers, that would not heare the former Prophets. Where are your fathers? Did not my words take hold of them? and they returned, and ſaid; As the Lord hath determined to doe vnto vs, according to our owne waies and works, ſo hath he done.*

5 Fiftly, for the ioy and comfort of Gods people, ſeeing the Lord vndertaking their cauſe, and executing his wrath vpon their enemies.

*Vſe* 1. Admonition, not to venture to commit ſuch ſinnes as wee can cloake and colour by denials, defences, excuſes, or extenuations; or if we haue that way faulted already, let vs ſpeede

our

our confeſſion, leſt the Lord haſten his plagues to compell vs vnto it: or if wee will not be brought to acknowledge them our ſelues, the iudgements and curſes which hee will ſend forth, ſhall openlie publiſh and declare them. And therefore it is good to iudge our ſelues, that hee may ſpare vs: to open our mouthes for a free confeſſion, and to ſhut them from leſſening of our offences. So did *Iob*, Chap.39.37. *Behold, I am vile: What ſhall I anſwere thee? I will lay my hand vpon my mouth. Once haue I ſpoken, but I will anſwere no more: yea twiſe, but I will proceede no further.* And that grace doth God promiſe to his people by the Prophet *Ezechiel: I will eſtabliſh my couenant with thee, and thou ſhalt know that I am the Lord, that thou maiſt remember, and be aſhamed, and neuer open thy mouth any more: becauſe of thy ſhame, when I am pacified towards thee, for all that thou haſt done, ſaith the Lord God.* Exech.16. 62.63.

Verſ.7. *The memoriall of the iuſt ſhall be bleſſed: but the name of the wicked ſhall rotte.*

THis is one particular of the bleſſings mentioned in the former verſe, that that which is deareſt to a man, as his name, ſhall be in eſtimation, and good account. The remembrance and mention of him being abſent aliue, and when hee is dead, ſhall be acceptable, and with his praiſe and commendation: But the name of the wicked is curſed, and therefore had in hatred and deteſtation, euen as much loathed as the ſtinke of his carcaſe, that lieth rotting in the graue.

*Doct.* Good men grow in credit: but ſinners glory ends in ſhame.

The credit and honour of good men will grow to bee better, and the reputation of ſinners will bee turned into ſhame. Onely godly men haue good names, and it is one difference that God putteth betweene them and the wicked, that they bee bleſſed herein peculiarlie, and all others excluded from the benefit of it. Such a threatning doth *Iſaias* denounce againſt the wicked: *Yee ſhall leaue your name as a curſe to my choſen: for the Lord God ſhall ſlay you, and call his ſeruants by a new name.* Though ſinfull men bee magnified of ſinners, yet they ſhall be made abominable to Saints, and that is the greateſt Iſai.65.15.

reproch: and though good men bee despised of the world, yet God will giue them glorie, and increase it, and vouchsafe them the titles, not onely of his seruants, but euen of his owne children.

*Reason* 1. First, they all, and none but they, are in credite with God and good men, and that onely is to be accounted true honour.

2 Secondly, the graces of sound hearted Christians will more and more appeare and shine out, and the secret sinnes of hypocrites, and other euill men will be discouered, and brought to light, and both sorts shall haue estimation in time, according to their behauiour: which Saint *Paul* meaneth, when he saith, *That as some mens sinnes are open before hand, and goe before vnto iudgement: so some other mens follow after. Likewise also, that good workes are manifest before hand, and they that are otherwise cannot be hid,* 1. Tim. 5. 24. 25.

3 Thirdly, glory is an vnseparable companion of goodnesse: and so is shame of sinne: for God hath ioyned them together, and therefore hee that hath one of them cannot bee without the other.

*Vse* 1. Confutation of their error, that hope to become honourable and famous, and to leaue a name behind them, by fleshly courses: Some by getting much, and raising vp their houses, and performing great exploits. But the vnhappie successe of their vaine expectation is noted in the Psalmes, that *though they thinke their houses and habitations shall continue from generation to generation, and call the landes by their names, yet they shall not continue in honour, but perish* like beasts that die of the murraine. Who in all the world preuailed like to *Nebuchadnezzer*, in *Nebuchadnezzers* time? and yet howsoeuer he was applauded and admired at the first, hee was derided and exploded at the last, and made a prouerbe, and parable of reproch. Some by fine wit and policie, and dexteritie in speaking. But let *Achitophel* and *Herod* be examples to these, the one in counsell was wonderfull deepe, and his speeches were as oracles, and yet we repute him not to be a man of famous memory, but behold in him the very image and figure of infamie. The other for his eloquent oration was deified of the people, and

Psalm. 49. 11. 12.

with

with a concordant acclamation extolled for a god; but yet as God laid a preſent ſtroke vpon his bodie, and deliuered his life into the power of baſe vermine, to gnaw out his bowels, ſo hee laid a continuall curſe vpon his name, which will cleaue vnto it for euer. Some others by hypocriſie, and pretence of mercie and pitie: and yet without all conſcience or loue of either. But praiſe ſo purchaſed, is ſubiect to ſtaines and loſſe of colour. The Phariſes had obtained the opinion of goodneſſe, godlineſſe, righteouſneſſe, and of all vertue. They were almoſt of al men, thought to be the moſt holy men: and can there be now a greater indignitie offered to a man, than to call him a Phariſee? for that name carrieth in it the perfect paterne of pride, hypocriſie, and palpable diſſimulation.

Conſolation to righteous men that God vndertaketh the protection of their names: it is not in the power of any creature to ſpoile them of their credit and reuerence: it is as ſurelie preſerued as their ſaluation: as their life is euerlaſting, ſo is the amiable remembrance of them. *The righteous*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *ſhal be had in an euerlaſting remembrãce.* The Prophets, and Apoſtles, and Chriſt himſelfe, and good men in their times were euill ſpoken of, and now haue a moſt bleſſed memoriall. And ſo of later yeeres, it was a great dignitie to bee a *Wolſey*, or a *Gardiner*, or others that were of great place, and cruell diſpoſition, but now wee reuerence the names of *Cranmer*, *Ridlie*, *Latimer*, *Hooper*, *Bradford*, and the meaneſt of them that ſuffered for the Goſpell of Chriſt, though they were then condemned for heretikes. The Apoſtle *Peter* encourageth vs to be bold and cheerefull *though wee ſhould bee railed vpon for Chriſt his ſake: for the Spirit of God is a Spirit of glorie*, and that is giuen to vs *and reſteth vpon vs*, and who ſhall remoue it from vs? *Nabothes* name was in great hazard to bee blemiſhed, when hee was conuicted, and executed for treaſon, and blaſphemie, and no meanes left in appearance, to cleare his innocencie: yet God knowing it, hath made vs to know it, and the ſhort ſhame that hee bare for a time, is turned to a durable honour through all generations.

2

Pſalm. 112.6.

1. Pet. 4. 14.

Verſ.8. *The wiſe in heart will receiue commandements: but the fooliſh in talke ſhall be beaten.*

*The wiſe in heart*, &c.] That is, ſuch as haue ſauing knowledge, and conſcience, *wil receiue commandements*, will heare and obey the word of God without replies and cauils againſt it: *but the fooliſh in talke*, he that abuſeth his lips to murmuring and friuolous obiections, *ſhall be beaten*, that is, ſhal be plagued for his contempt.

The ſenſe will be plaine, if the ſupply be made in both clauſes of the oppoſition, in this manner: The wiſe in heart will readily receiue commandements, and therefore ſhall be rewarded: but the fooliſh in heart will bee fooliſh in talke to reiect commandements, therefore he ſhall be puniſhed.

*Doct.* Men muſt obey where God commands. Iames 1.19.

We ought to bee tractable to the will of God, without reſiſting or gainſaying. To this dutie Saint *Iames* doth admoniſh vs, ſaying: *Let euery man be ſwift to heare, and ſlow to ſpeake:* his meaning is not to perſwade men to come ſuddainly, and raſhly to the word without preparation: but to hearken deſirouſlie, with reuerence and attention when they are prepared, and not to picke quarels againſt that which is deliuered, vnaduiſedly and out of a diſtempered affection, but vpon mature deliberation with a mind willing to bee reſolued, to propoſe their doubts.

*Reaſon* 1. Firſt, the Lord hath abſolute authoritie ouer vs: and therefore he iuſtly may lay his commandements vpon vs.

2 Secondly, his whole will, and all his waies are perfectlie righteous: and therefore to take exception againſt them muſt needs be vnrighteous.

3 Thirdly, they are altogether full of wiſedome: and therefore none but fooles will preſume to charge them with folly.

*Vſe* 1. Inſtruction to caſt off and remooue away the ſinfull luſts of our harts, the fleſhly diſcourſe of carnal reaſon, and the reſolute and ſetled purpoſe of any wicked way. For al theſe wil imbitter the ſoule, and whet the tongue to withſtand and reſiſt the holie commandements of God: Iam.1.21. 1.Pet.2.1. Ier.44.16.17.

Reproofe

Reproofe of them that are willing to receiue the promiſes of God, but not the Commandements: or if they doe, it is in ſuch things as bee agreeable to their owne will, or at leaſt not contrary to it. So they dealt with *Ieremiah*, intreating him to declare vnto them all that the Lord ſhould ſay, and they would doe it; and they would haue bin as good as their word, if he had incouraged them to take their voyage into Egypt, whether they were bent to goe: but when he diſſwaded them from it by expreſſe prohibition and threatnings, they grew to another point; that it was not God which ſpake that, but *Ieremie*; and *Ieremie* did not ſpeake truely, but falſly; and it was not of himſelfe, but from *Baruch*; and *Baruch* had no good meaning in it, but to deliuer them into the hands of the Caldeans to be ſlaine, or carried away captiues: Ier.43.2,3. 2 Ier. 42,10.

Conſolation for them that ſubmit themſelues to learne and obey the doctrine of Gods wil, though it many times doe croſſe them in their affections and deſires, in their reaſon and conceits, in their pleaſures and delights, in their profits and commodities: this manifeſteth true wiſedome, this declareth a faithfull heart, this giueth a cleere teſtimony of ſinceritie. The rich yong man attained not to this; nor *Herod* went ſo farre: though he did many things by *Iohns* perſwaſion, yet hee would not conforme himſelfe as to the will of God, to doe euery thing, or to leaue euery thing according as hee required: Matth.19.22. Marke 6. 17.18,20. 3

Terrour for the braue gallants of our age which exerciſe their ripe heads and freſh wits in wreſtling with the trueth of God, and take it for a glory to giue it a foyle. But howſoeuer their prompt wits, and ready tongues, together with art and Satans aſſiſtance, may ſometimes perplexe and trouble a poore Chriſtian, yet ſhall they nothing preuaile againſt Chriſt and his verity, nor gaine any thing at his hands, but ſhame and puniſhment. It were safer for them to incounter with tenne *Samſons*, then to trie their manhood with one point or article of Gods holy doctrine. But their caſe is worſt of all, which obſtinately, peruerſely, and of wilfull malice doe reiect all that is taught them out of the word. It is in vaine to admoniſh them, 4

as the Prophet ſaith, Hoſ. 4. 4. *Thy people are as they that rebuke the Prieſt*: that is, preſumptuous perſons, ſinning with an high hand, in refuſing to heare, or be directed by the Prieſt, the of the law; Deut. 17. 12. or to giue eare to the Miniſters of the Goſpel now: but contentiouſly diſobey the truth, & ſo bring *vpon their own ſoules indignation & wrath, tribulation and anguiſh*. Rom. 2. 9.

Verſ. 9. *He that walketh vprightly, walketh boldly: but hee that peruerteth his waies ſhall be knowne.*

HE *that walketh vprightly.*] That is, doth carefully looke to his waies with an honeſt heart: *walketh ſurely*; hauing both the affection, and ground, and effects of Chriſtian boldneſſe: *but he that peruerteth his waies*: that is, doth allow himſelfe in any courſe, though neuer ſo ſecretly: *ſhall bee knowen*; his ſinnes ſhall be detected.

The ſenſe of the whole verſe may be thus expreſſed: *He that walketh vprightly, walketh ſurely*; becauſe his faithfulneſſe ſhall be knowne to his praiſe: *And hee that peruerteth his waies, walketh dangerouſly*; becauſe his leaudneſſe ſhall be knowne to his ſhame.

*Doct.* He liues ſafely, that liues ſincerely.

All ſound ſafety and boldneſſe proceedeth from ſinceritie of heart, and integritie of life. Euery religious man that feareth the Lord, hath this promiſe, Pſal. 112. 7, 8. *That no euill tidings ſhall make him afraid, becauſe he beleeueth in the Lord.* If all the world would tell him of perill, when God himſelfe doth warrant him ſafetie, he will giue moſt credit to him that hath moſt truth, and moſt power alſo to diſpoſe of all euents. And his heart is not as a pole that is pitched vp, or a ſtake that is ſticked vp, which euerie hand may plucke awry, or euery blaſt of wind may blowe downe; nor like a dry wall without a quoine or buttreſſe, or any other binding to fortifie it: but it is fixed and eſtabliſhed as a tree that is well rooted, and groweth ſtrongly, or a building that hath a ſure foundation, and ſtandeth faſt, and ſo is freed from feare and all ſlauiſh terror.

*Reaſon* 1. Firſt, his heart hath Gods owne eye to behold it, and his Spirit to teſtifie the faithfulneſſe of it, and ſo receiueth comfort from

from him, as *Iob* did, when in the confidence of his cauſe and conſcience he ſaith; *O that I had ſome to heare me: behold my ſigne, that the Almightie wil witneſſe for me, though mine aduerſary ſhould write a booke againſt me.* Iob 31.35. Whereas contrariwiſe, the hearts of hypocrites, being ſearched by him, are found moſt fraudulent and deceitfull.

Secondly, the courſe of their actions is ſuch as will endure light, and the more they are examined, the better they will proue, and therefore they neede not feare any might or malice, or cunning aduerſaries that ſhall ſeeke their diſgrace. And vpon the aſſurance of this the Prophet profeſſeth his vndaunted courage and magnanimitie, with challenge alſo to his calumniant enemie whoſoeuer he were: *I haue ſet my face like a flint, and I know that I ſhall not be aſhamed. He is neere that iuſtifieth me, who will contend with me? let vs ſtand together: who is mine aduerſary? let him come neere to me.* Iſa.50.7,8. And though their enemies for a time do falſly ſlander them, yet the Lord in due ſeaſon *will make their righteouſneſſe as cleere as the noone day.* Pſal.37.6. 2

Thirdly, their bodies and ſtate are in Gods cuſtodie, and hee hath vndertaken the defence and preſeruation of them; as hee promiſeth, Chap.3.26. *The Lord ſhall be for thine aſſurance, and ſhall preſerue thy foote from taking.* Whereas the wicked are out of Gods protection, and goe perpetually in perill. 3

Fourthly, their ſoules are prepared for death and the iudgement ſeate of Chriſt, and therefore more deſire to be diſſolued, then are afraid to here of the neereneſſe of their diſſolution: which is contrary in the wicked, *who all their daies are in bondage to the feare of death and damnation:* Heb.2.15. 4

Inſtruction to get apparent and euident teſtimonies of vprightneſſe, which will make our liues comfortable, and keepe off many miſerable vexations and horrors that come vpon the wicked. And this wee ſhall doe, if wee labour to know all that God would haue vs to learne, and to indeuor to practiſe all that we know, and confeſſe to God all that wee faile to practiſe: for ſo farre as we are willingly ignorant of any duetie, or careleſſe to performe it, or ſecure when wee neglect it, and conceale our ſinnes, not acknowledging them that the Lord may remit them, Pſal.32.2,3. *Vſe* 1.

them, so farre we come short of a good conscience.

2 Consolation for all that be vpright, that whether they walke abroad, or stay at home; whether they bee in company with others, or alone by themselues; whether it be in the day, or in the night; whether they be waking, or sleeping; they are well assured of certaine safetie.

3 Terrour for sinfull men, whose consciences bee at all times readie to assaile them. Naturall courage will not helpe them in the time of extremitie. How many seeming very valiant, as *Saul* for example, haue through desperate feare, laid violent hands vpon their owne bodies? And let power and courage concurre together, yet both will be insufficient to strengthen a heart that Gods iudgement and their owne guiltinesse doe weaken. As *Balthazzer* being bold to defie *Cyrus*, and to bidde battell to the Lord himselfe, prophaning his holy vessels in despight of him: yet now in the middest of iollitie, amongst his friends in his owne house, in a strong Citie guarded with an host of armed souldiers, hee was so frighted and terrified, that his countenance was changed, his heart was resolued into dastardlinesse, the ioynts of his loynes were loosed, and his knees smote one against another. And what was it that so daunted him? the sight of an hand writing vpon the wall. There were neither more enemies, nor fewer friends, nor any other alteration then before: but God wakened his conscience, and his conscience shewed him his guiltinesse, and all together threatned his destruction; and hereby his great courage was so quickly killed. And this also may serue to take away the vaine confidence of foolish men that bee bold to commit iniquitie, and yet looke to escape the reproach of it: hoping neuer to be found out. But they forget that the Apostle saith, that mens sinnes come to light in diuers maners, some presently vpon the fact, some long after, some in their life time, some after they be dead, some reserued to the last day; but so, that all shall certainely be manifested one day. *Caine* had as faire possibilitie and likelihood to couer his crueltie, as euer any sinner had, or possibly can haue to conceale his offences, no man but himselfe knowing of it, no circumstances being to sift it out

1. Tim. 5. 24. 25.

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by, if hee would keepe his owne counſell; and yet what fact almoſt is more notoriouſlie knowne and publiſhed, and that with deteſtation, then his murdering of *Abel?* And it is not to be imputed to his owne ſillineſſe, or careleſneſſe of his name and credit, as though negligentlie hee had diſcouered it himſelfe; for he would haue hid it from the Lord, and conſequentlie from all men, if he could haue ſo carried the matter.

Verſ. 10. *Hee that winketh with the eye worketh ſorrow: and he that is fooliſh in talke ſhall be beaten.*

THis confirmeth the latter clauſe of the former verſe, That they that peruert their waies ſhall be knowne, though they doe it neuer ſo ſecretly, which is meant by the winking of the eie. Yet by this it ſhall appeare that it is knowne, becauſe it ſhall bee puniſhed. For as they practiſe miſchiefe againſt others, and many times worke them ſorrow: ſo they certainelie bring miſchiefe on their owne heads, and procure ſorrow to their owne ſoules. And yet all winking is not condemned: but that which tendeth to hurt, when men winke wiles. The Apoſtle beckned or winked at *Iohn* that he ſhould aske who it was that ſhould betray Chriſt, and yet this was well done of him; for he ſhewed a reuerend regard of Chriſt, that he would not bee loud and audacious in his preſence. If they peruert their waies openlie by beeing fooliſh in ſpeech, open iudgement ſhall be executed vpon them for their open ſinnes, and thereby their mouthes ſhall be ſtopped. Ioh. 13. 24.

It is not ſafe to vſe any member of the bodie, or any geſture though neuer ſo cloſelie, to commit ſinne. The ſonnes of *Belial*, vnthriftie perſons, are ſo deſcribed by their behauiour and threatned to bee puniſhed: Chap. 6. 12. 13. 14. 15. *He walketh with a froward mouth, hee maketh a ſigne with his eies, hee ſignifieth with his feete, hee inſtructeth with his fingers*, &c. *Therefore ſhall his deſtruction come ſpeedily: hee ſhall bee deſtroyed ſuddenlie without recouerie.* *Doct.* Sinne muſt haue no allowance.

They are markes and meſſengers of a ſinfull heart within, as in the ſame Chapter, verſ. 14. *Leaud things are in his heart, he imagineth euill at all times.* *Reaſons* 1.

2 Secondly, great hurt is done by such gestures and speeches and other like behauiour.

3 Thirdlie, the members of our bodies, as eies, and tongue, and such like, were created for the seruice of God, and are required to bee *weapons of righteousnesse* against sinne, and not of sinne, against God and his righteousnesse: Rom.6.19.

*Vse* 1. To looke well to euery one of them, that none of them bee in pay with Satan, or lust, or malice, to fight the battailes of the flesh, against the word and spirit of God. The Lord forbiddeth to *set a foote towards the breach of the Sabbath:* or *to smite with the fist of wickednesse*, or *to lift vp a finger to crueltie or hard dealing:* Isai.58.4.9.13.

2 Terror for them that haue the members of their bodies as armed rebels against the Lord, all following a sinfull heart which is their captaine and leader.

3 Consolation to the seruants of God, that the Lord beholdeth euerie looke of the wicked aduersaries, euery becke, euerie nod, and all their plots and practises, and therefore euerie one shall be frustrate and defeated. And so the the Lord heareth the boasts and insultations, the threatnings and slaunders, and all kind of hurtfull calumniations, that are breathed out against his people, hee will take their cause in hand, and those virulent tongues that haue beaten others with false accusations, and lies, shall be beaten themselues with the rod of his vengeance; and the innocencie of the righteous shall bee cleared by the punishment inflicted vpon their enemies.

Vers.11. *The mouth of of a righteous man is a welspring of life: but iniquitie couereth the mouth of the wicked.*

IN Israel, and in the countries bordering vpon it, it was a great benefit to haue wels of water, both for the vse of men and of the cattle, and therefore things of great account be many times compared to them in the Scriptures, and here the mouth of a righteous man is so called in a double respect, both for the constancie of good conference (according to the similitude, for such springs as were continuall, and would hold out

as

as well in ſommer as in winter, were ſaid to be wels of liuing water: Gen.26.19. as alſo, and eſpecially for the good effect, that they be inſtruments ſometimes to beget, & vſually to confirme and refreſh the life of the ſoule. The latter part of the verſe hath been expounded in the ſixt verſe.

The expoſition ſtandeth thus: The mouth of a righteous man doth alwaies flow with wholeſome words; and therefore ſhall bee continued open with bleſſings: But the mouth of a wicked man doth alwaies flow with hurtfull words: and therefore ſhall be ſtopped with violence.

*The mouth of the righteous,* &c.] A good man is neuer barren of good ſpeeches. It is giuen as a precept by the Apoſtle to the Coloſſians, 4.6. that their ſpeech ſhould bee alwaies gracious, and poudred with ſalt, that is, holy and wholeſome for the matter, and diſcreete and ſeaſonable for the manner, which is not onely a commandement deliuered by God, as a thing that ought to bee: but a duetie in exerciſe and practiſe with all godly Chriſtians. *Doct.* Good men haue euer good words.

Firſt, the law of the Lord is in their heart, and therefore they cannot chooſe but talke and conferre of it: Pſalm.37.30.31. *Reaſons* 1

Secondly, their loue to God and the conſcience of their dutie conſtraineth them to praiſe him for his word and nature, and workes: and to make his glorie appeare vnto others. 2

Thirdly, they vſe it as a meanes to refreſh their owne hearts, and to procure helpe by prayer, and ſuch other exerciſes, for the ſupplie of all their wants of ſoule and bodie. 3

Fourthly, their loue to their brother, and deſire to haue men brought to euerlaſting life, doth ſtirre them to teach and exhort, to rebuke and admoniſh, to comfort and encourage, and euery way to helpe them to ſaluation. 4

Confutation of them who aſcribe the abilitie of conference and prayer wholly to men of wit and learning, that therefore they can ſay nothing becauſe their education hath not been in ſuch exerciſes, it belongeth to Preachers and Miniſters. But the holy Ghoſt doth impute it to righteouſneſſe heere, and to the efficacie and power of the ſpirit. Zach.12.10. *I will powre vpon the houſe of Dauid, and on the inhabitants of Ieruſalem the* *Vſe* 1.

*ſpirit of grace and prayer.* Hee ſaith not they ſhall attaine vnto the art and method of prayer, which carnall men may get by carnall meanes, in the earth: but it is a bleſſing powred downe from aboue, as a gift from heauen, which onely his owne children haue aſcending vpon them, and all his people bee repleniſhed with it. It was not promiſed onely to the Prieſts, and Leuites, and Prophets, but to the houſe of *Dauid*, as in former times it had been on *Dauids* owne perſon: and to the inhabitants of Ieruſalem, as well as to the houſe of *Dauid*. He that ſaith expreſly that he cannot pray, ſaith alſo by conſequence that he is not righteous, nor yet in caſe to be ſaued. And hee that wanteth will and abilitie to talke Chriſtianlie, doth proclaime by ſilence, that hee hath not the ſpirit of faith. For the holy Ghoſt hath not loſt that vertue now, which he was wonted to worke in *Dauids* time, and in *Paules*, who thus teſtifie of themſelues, and of all other ſound hearted Chriſtians; *Becauſe we haue the ſame ſpirit of faith, according as it is written, I beleeued, and therefore haue I ſpoken, we alſo beleeue, and therefore ſpeake*, 2.Cor.4.13. More ſhall be ſpoken of this point in the 13. chapter, 14. verſe.

Verſ.12. *Hatred ſtirreth vp contentions: but loue couereth all treſpaſſes.*

HAtred: and all vncharitable affections, as enuie and wrath, *ſtirreth vp ſtrife*: worketh all kinde of reuenge and miſchiefe, as backbiting, vpbraiding with former faults, and very often procureth iniuſt criminations. *But loue couereth all treſpaſſes*: by forgiuing them and reproouing them in friendly manner, and by concealing them from all thoſe, to whom the knowledge of them hath not come, or doth not appertaine. The oppoſition is thus framed, Hatred ſtirreth vp contentions, and blazeth abroad mens infirmities, but loue ſeeketh peace, and couereth all treſpaſſes.

*Doct.* An ill heart raiſeth contention.

*Hatred.*] The actions and ſpeeches of men are not ſo much a cauſe of ſtrife and debate, as the euill affections of their hearts. Diuers time it falleth out that the wrong doer is not ſo much faultie

faultie as hee that ſhould better beare it: and no iniuries could worke a quarrelous contention, vnleſſe there were a defect of loue on both ſides. It is ſaid, Chap. 18. 6. *That a fooles lips come with ſtrife.* It is not the occaſion giuen, ſo much as the lips that make the breach: and the lips could not doe it, vnleſſe the man ſet them on worke; & the man would not ſo ſet them on worke, vnleſſe folly and ſinne ouerruled both him and his lippes. So Chap. 15. 18. angry men are brought in for the authors of ſtriſe; but he that is ſlow to wrath, hath this teſtimony giuen him, that he will appeaſe it. What was the reaſon why *Ioſephs* brethren had ſuch a quarrell at him? Becauſe they ſaw their father loue him more then all the reſt, they hated him, and could not ſpeak peaceably to him: Gen. 37. 4. What moued *Ahab* to be alway ſo bitter againſt *Eliah* and *Michaiah*? He telleth the cauſe himſelfe; he hated them, and reputed them to be his enemies: 1. Kin. 21. 20. and 22. 8.

First, whereſoeuer hatred is, and one man maligneth another, there is pride; and *onely by pride contentions come:* Chap. 13. 10. *Reaſ.* 1.

Secondly, if ſtrife did not more proceede from the inward corruptions, then the outward occaſions, they that were moſt wronged, ſhould neceſſarily be moſt contentious; and ſo *Moſes*, and *Dauid*, and *Ieremy*, and *Paul*, and Ieſus Chriſt himſelfe of all other, ſhould haue been moſt vnquiet and clamorous. But theſe had neuer any equall vnto them for peaceable and gentle behauiour: Numb. 12. 2, 3. Matth. 12. 19. 1. Pet. 4. 23. 2

Confutation of them that lay the blame of their frowardneſſe vpon the vnkindneſſe of their neighbours: and eſpecially of ſuch as charge the miniſterie of the word, and the Preachers of it, with all the ſchiſmes and ſeditions, and with all the breaches and diuiſions that are in the Church. They publiſh the Goſpell of grace, which teacheth peace, and maketh peace betweene God and man, and betweene man and man, yea a man and his owne conſcience. But would there bee ſo great oppoſitions, ſay they, and themſelues and their doctrine ſo much croſſed and reſiſted, vnleſſe the cauſe were in them? They be troubleſome men, and buſie bodies, giuen to faction, *Vſe* 1.

and no man can liue in peace by them. The Diuell cannot liue in quiet by them, and therefore hee maketh a tempeſt in their hearts whom he poſſeſſeth; and ſo their waues daſh againſt the Miniſters and all other good Chriſtians. Our Sauiour knew that ſuch would bee the ſucceſſe of his Goſpell; that wicked men would be in as great a hurly burly at it, as if hee had come with fire and ſword againſt them. *Ieremy* cleareth himſelfe of all priuate occaſions of diſcontentment amongſt the people; hee neither borrowed on vſury, nor lent on vſury, nor had any trafficke or dealing with them: yet all contended againſt him, and euery man curſed him. But what moued them to ſuch paſſion and diſtemper? the Diuell and their own ſinfull hearts; which the Prophet ſo mightily warred againſt.

Mat. 10. 34.

Ier. 11. 60.

2 Inſtruction. If our hearts riſe againſt our brethren, and begin to grow turbulent and vnpeaceable, that then wee call them to examination: as St. *Iames* doth them that would examine themſelues: from whence are theſe wars and contentions? are they not from luſts that fight in the members?

Iames 4. 1.

3 Not to truſt enuious perſons, (for they haue not the gouernment of themſelues) though they ſpeake faire, and offer reconciliation: yet if they cleanſe not their ſoules of their inward rancour of malice, and that by repentance, they will breake out againe into bitterneſſe; as *Saul* did againſt *Dauid*.

*Doct.* Loue is the leaſt fault finder.

*But loue couereth*, &c.] Chriſtian loue doth cauſe men to bee mercifull to the ſoules and names of their brethren: which thing Saint *Peter* teacheth, alleadging almoſt the very ſame words of this Scripture: *Aboue all things haue feruent loue amongſt you: for loue couereth a multitude of ſinnes.* It hideth them all, though there be neuer ſo many.

1. Pet 4. 8.

*Reaſ.* 1. None haue this loue but ſuch as haue felt Gods loue to themſelues, remitting and couering their owne ſinnes: and that maketh them mercifull to others.

And by that argument the Colloſſians are perſwaded to that duety, *that they ſhould forbeare one another, and forgiue one another, if any man haue a quarrell to another: euen as Chriſt forgaue them, ſo ſhould they doe.* Col. 3. 13.

2 Secondly, they eſteeme their brethren as their owne fleſh, and

and members of the ſame body: and therefore will not willingly diſcouer the deformities, or vlcers, or the naked or vncomely parts thereof.

Thirdly, they propoſe a copie or patterne to themſelues, how themſelues would bee dealt with in the like caſe; according to the rule of our Sauiour, and the ſumme of the law and Prophets. 3 Math.7.12.

Inſtruction to performe this dutie with faithfulneſſe and good diſcretion to our neighbours. First, let vs take doubtfull things in the beſt part; for loue is not ſuſpicious, but hopeth well of things that may haue good conſtruction, and peruerteth them not to the worſt ſenſe. So wee deale with our children in their diſtempers, imputing them to ſome griping with wind, or breeding of teeth, or that ſome pinne pricketh them: it is meere neceſſitie that driueth vs to ſee their frowardneſſe. Secondly, though it be a fault, yet if it be a ſmall infirmitie, and eſpecially if it be a priuate wrong vnto our ſelues, let vs paſſe by it, as the Lord doth moſt gratiouſly with vs, whoſe children we muſt herein declare our ſelues to be, in imitating of him: and it is a mans honour to paſſe by an offence. Thirdly, if there bee an offence committed fit to be reproued, let vs vſe all holy lenitie, if it may preuale, or ſeueritie in compaſſion to draw them out of their ſinnes; for that is the beſt couering to bring them to repentance, that their iniquities may bee couered from Gods eyes, and waſhed away for euer. So did *Nathan* helpe to couer *Dauids* ſinnes, and was the beſt inſtrument of his clearing, by his free and faithfull diſcouerie of them. Fourthly, if it belong not to our place to giue them admonition, or they receiue it not at our hands; then let vs ſhew their diſeaſes to more skilful Phyſitians, and their wounds to better Surgeons, as *Ioſeph* told his father of his brethrens infamie: Gen.37.2. 1.Cor. 1.11. and the houſe of *Cloe* ſhewed *Paul* of the diſſenſions of the Corinthians. *Vſe* 1. Eph.5.12. Prou.10.3. Iob.23.17. Iames 5.20. Gen.37.2. 1.Cor.1.11.

Reproofe of them that take it for their owne honour to bring others vnto diſgrace, they thinke that the blackeneſſe of their brethren wil make them white. When they haue no goodneſſe in themſelues to helpe their credit, they goe about to

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dig it out of the dunghill of their neighbours corruptions.

Conſolation to the ſeruants of God, that if the weake loue of creatures, that haue in them ſo great defect of loue and proneneſſe to hatred, be of ſuch force as to hide their ſinnes, which be further from them; how much more ſhall the infinite loue of God couer all their ſinnes that are ſo neere vnto him? No man in his beſt loue to his beſt friend, can either forgiue ſinne, or worke repentance that ſinne may bee forgiuen: But God can performe both, and hath beſtowed vpon vs his Sonne; and his Sonne hath beſtowed vpon vs his life and blood to effect both.

Verſ. 13. *In the lips of him that hath vnderſtanding, Wiſdome is found: but a rod ſhall be for the backe of him that is deſtitute of vnderſtanding.*

THeſe words neede no further explanation, then the ſupply of that which is to be vnderſtood in both the clauſes. For this ſeemeth to bee the ſenſe of them: In the lips or ſpeech of him that hath vnderſtanding wiſedome is found, which keepeth iudgements and puniſhments from him: but in the lips of him that wanteth vnderſtanding, folly is found; which bringeth iudgements and puniſhmet vpon him. The firſt hemiſtich, or former part of the verſe, is the ſame ſimply ſet downe, and without allegory or metaphore, as was comparatiuely vttered in the eleuenth verſe, by the ſimilitude of a wel-ſpring.

The latter part is the ſame in ſenſe that was in the eight and tenth verſes: for there it is ſaid; that *the fooliſh in talke ſhall be beaten.*

Verſ. 14. *Wiſe men lay vp knowledge: but the mouth of the foole is a preſent deſtruction.*

HEre is declared by what meanes wiſe men attaine to that abilitie and ſufficiencie of fruitfull ſpeeches, by due attention to that which is ſpoken to them, or which they reade: or by diligent obſeruation of things which they behold. Thoſe they lay

lay vp, as a man would his treaſure, in a ſafe place. As therefore a prouident thriftie husband, which hath gathered together a ſtocke, will bee readie vpon ſhort warning to make a purchaſe, or vpon any good occaſion to disburſe a ſumme of monie: ſo hee that is faithfull in ſeeking knowledge, and applieth both heart and memorie to hold it faſt, and keepe it, ſhall readily in conuenient time draw out the good things which hee hath learned, either for his owne vſe, or the benefit and profit of others. Which is contrary in careleſſe and heedleſſe perſons: for they will bee as forward to ſpeake as any others; but that which is within the heart, will quickly bee at hand to come out at the lips, and that is poiſon, and venome, and peſtilent matter, which will certainly hurt themſelues, and be dangerous to others. So then thus ſtandeth the oppoſition: wiſe men lay vp knowledge, and therefore their mouthes are a preſent preſeruation: but fooliſh men reiect knowledge; and therefore their mouthes are a preſent deſtruction.

*Wiſe men*, &c.] It is not enough to bring the eare to heare holie inſtructions, but the heart muſt alſo receiue and keepe them. The neceſſitie of this dutie appeareth by the ſerious exhortation which he giueth to that purpoſe in the beginning of the ſeuenth Chapter: *My Sonne keepe my words, and hide my commandements with thee: keepe my commandements, and thou ſhalt liue, and mine inſtruction as the apple of thine eies.* Hee giueth this counſell as a friend, to a neere friend, as a father to his owne ſonne; for the matter of it is not of ſmall importance, but of the greateſt weight and moment, it behoueth men not onelie to lay ſure hold of holy doctrines in regard of ſtate, but of their very liues. And therefore not to looke to the ſafe keeping thereof as we are chatie of our monie, but to be as prouident that we be not ſpoiled of them, as wee are watchfull to preſerue the members, yea the deareſt members of our bodies from violence. *Doct.* 1. What good the eare laieth in, that the heart muſt lay vp.

Firſt, the excellencie of wiſedome and ſauing knowledge may allure vs vnto it: for it is more precious and profitable then all earthly treaſures, which earthly minded men horde vp ſo carefully. *Reaſon* 1.

*For the merchandize thereof is better then the merchandize of filuer, and the gaine thereof is better then gold. It is more pretious then pearles: and all things that thou canſt deſire, are not to be compared vnto her:* Prou.3.14.15.

2 Secondly, it concerneth our ſaluation, and euerlaſting happines, faithfully to retaine the holy word of God in our ſoules.

And therefore it is ſaid to the Hebrewes, *How ſhall we eſcape, if we neglect ſo great ſaluation, which at the firſt began to bee preached by the Lord, and afterward was confirmed to vs by them that heard him:* Heb.2.3.

3 Thirdly, the ſtore of grace that is congeſted doth miniſter matter, and opportunitie, and readineſſe of good and wholeſome ſpeeches to the lips.

For, that reaſon the Prophet yeeldeth; Pſal.49.3.4. *My mouth ſhall ſpeake of wiſedome, and the meditation of my heart is of knowledge, I will incline mine eare to a parable,* &c.

4 Fourthly, by this meanes: men are in their whole liues both framed to be good, and declared to bee good, and deliuered from all ſinfull courſes, that they may continue to bee good.

Pſalm.119.11. As hee profeſſeth in the Pſalme. *I haue hid thy promiſe in mine heart, that I might not ſinne againſt thee.*

According to that alſo in the ſecond chapter of this booke, Verſ.10.11. *When wiſedome entreth into thine heart, and knowledge delighteth thy ſoule; then ſhal counſell preſerue thee, and vnderſtanding ſhall keepe thee.*

And in this point the good ground, in the Goſpell, hath the preheminence aboue all the others, it receiueth the word, and giueth entertainement vnto it by attention, and ſo it goeth beyond the high way. Secondly, it hath a roote in it ſelfe, whereby it maketh a bold profeſſion in the time of perſecution, and ſo it goeth beyond the ſtonie ground. Thirdlie, it keepeth a conſtant courſe of obedience, and bringeth the fruite of the ſeede to ripeneſſe, and ſo it goeth beyond the thornie ground.

*Vſe 1.* Reproofe of them, which, through the greedie deſires of corruptible and caſuall treaſures, are wholly withheld from ſeeking this one thing onely neceſſarie. A great crop of wheat

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is offered vnto them, which they refuſe, and fill their barnes and garners with chaffe and ſtubble. They may loade themſelues, and fill their houſes with ſiluer and gold, with pearles and diamonds, and all kind of pretious ſtones: and they take their backburthen, and peſter their houſes with old ruſtie yron, and droſſe, and pebbles, and other things that be heauy and cumberſome, but of no value. They haue libertie and opportunitie, they haue perſwaſion and incouragement to gather together, and ſtore vp abundance of durable riches, which can neuer periſh, nor be taken from them; and they take paines to heape vp ſnowe, and ſuch like matter, that will melt away and vaniſh in a moment.

Terrour to them that ſuffer Satan to rob them of all good leſſons and inſtructions, and yet thinke that no hurt at all is done to them. If their houſes had been broken vp by men, and their money taken out of their cheſts, their neighbours ſhould heare their clamours, and the whole Country ſhould heare their outcries; but let the diuell himſelfe bereaue them of that portion which ſhould not haue been onely for liuing, but life, not for this preſent ſtate, but their euerlaſting ſtate: in this caſe they be quiet, no wrong is offered to them, they haue ſuſtained no manner of loſſe. It is ſet downe as a iudgement and curſe by the Prophet, that men ſhall *put their monie in-ti a broken bagge*: and what a fearefull caſe ſtand they in then that put the ſacred inſtructions of the bleſſed word of God into a bottomleſſe heart, that can hold nothing, but that which will peruert and hurt them? The Apoſtle giueth an earneſt caueat to the Hebrewes, admoniſhing them ſtrictly *to giue heed to the things which they heard, leſt they ſhould let them ſlippe*, and as the word ſignifieth, ſhould leake or runne out. For it were better to haue wounds in our bodies that all our blood ſhould guſh out, then to be riſted veſſels, hauing chinkes in our ſoules, that the doctrine of life ſhould ſoake away, and oaze out from vs. 2 Hag. 1. 6. Heb. 2. 1.

Conſolation to them that haue couetous deſires after ſpirituall diſhes, that would ſuffer nothing that waies to paſſe from them, but inlarge their affections vnſatiablie to gather 3

all. It is a point of follie, indeed, as it was in the rich man, *Luk.* 12. to multiplie worldlie wealth: but these haue the Lord to commend their wisedome, and it may as truelie bee affirmed of them, as of such as be merciful, because they be the same persons, though the respects differ, That they lay vp in store, for themselues, a good foundation against the time to come, that they may obtaine eternall life.

*Doct.* 2. An ill mans mouth worketh much woe.

*But the mouth of the wicked*, &c.] The tongues of vngodly men are alwaies pernicious and hurtfull. Of them Saint *Iames* speaketh largely, comparing them to fire breaking out in an house, or whole towne, especially when it commeth by the hostilitie of the enemie, making assault to it; by meanes whereof men are staied from extinguishing of it, and haue not onely their goods, but their life also in great perill. And this flame of the tongue is so much more dangerous then materiall fire, Iames. 3. 5. 7. because *it is kindled of hell*, that is, the diuell himselfe hath set it on worke. And so in the same place he resembleth them to *poison*, and that not of the common sort, but *to strong poison*, which is deadly, and faileth not to worke the bane of them that drinke it.

*Reas.* 1. First, they are hurtfull, and bring great annoiance and mischiefe to other men, and therefore in the Scriptures are called *swords*, and *arrowes*, and *rasors*, and *mortall weapons*. Ier. 9. 8. Psalm. 52. 2. And yet such similitudes are notable fullie to expresse and set out the euill that commeth by venomous mouthes and virulent speeches. First, the tongue most commonly causeth weapons to bee drawne: all warres, all rebellions, all massacres, all quarrels, all manner of strifes are first breathed out of mens mouthes, on some part. Secondly, the hand may be held that handleth the weapon, the strokes may be warded, armour may preserue from the violence of them, or there may be refuge and couert to hide them that are pursued: but who can stay an vnruly tongue? What defence is against it? whether shall a man flie from a false accuser? what distance of place will preuent malicious calumniations? Thirdly, they which fall into the hands of most fierce and cruell enemies, which are pearced, and wounded with keenest and sharpest

ſharpeſt edge tooles haue all the hurt vpon their bodies; the extremitie of it reacheth but to take away their naturall life: but a ſlanderous tongue doth ſmite at the name, wich an ingenious man would forgoe his breath to preſerue: and a peſtiferous ſeducing tongue doth peruert the ſoule, and by the poyſon thereof, are many thouſands brought to euerlaſting perdition.

Secondly, they bring deſtruction vpon themſelues, and draw miſchiefe vpon their owne heads, as the Scripture teſtifieth: *The words of a wiſe man haue grace: but the lips of a foole deuoure himſelfe. The beginning of the words of his mouth is fooliſhneſſe: and the latter end of his mouth is wicked madneſſe.* The truth of this ſhall be ſpoken of more at large in the eighteenth chapter, and ſeuenth verſe; vpon theſe words; *A fooles mouth is his owne deſtruction, and his lips are a ſnare for his ſoule.* 2 Eccle.10.12.13.

Inſtruction to bee very well aduiſed in all our ſpeeches, ſithence they are ſo important and weightie. Who would not heedefully foreſee where his arrow ſhall hit, before hee ſhoote it out of his bowe; leſt it ſhould deſtroy any perſon or other creature through negligence? who would not be very circumſpect and warie in diſcharging of a peece, leſt hee ſhould doe miſchiefe by it? And yet by theſe a man may affray, and not hurt; and hurt, and not kill; and kill, and not die himſelfe: but what arrow, what ſhot, what artillerie, what murdering peece is to bee compared to the mouth of a man that is not guided by a wiſe and watchfull foreſight? Great woe it worketh to other men; but it ſurely bringeth death it ſelfe vnto himſelfe: euery word that breaketh an other mans skinne, doth certainely breake the kall of his owne heart; and hee that doth aime at another to giue him a wound, cannot miſſe himſelfe to violate his owne life. For ſo wee learne in this booke: *Hee that keepeth his mouth keepeth his life: but he that openeth his lips, deſtruction ſhall be to him.* It concerneth therefore euery man to be as prouident, yea more carefull to looke to that which goeth out of his lips, then to that which commeth in; to be more afraid to vtter blaſphemous, reuiling, ſlanderous and infectious ſpeeches, in regard of the ſoule; then to eate and deuour *Vſe* 1. Prou.13.3.

uour vnwholesome meates in regard of the body. And by this we are admonished to commit our mouthes to a better keeper then our owne wit or reason, or ciuill disposition; lest lust and Satan doe ouer-rule vs, to let in what they will, and to let out sinfull words, when, and whether, and as oft as they will. And this moued the Prophet to pray to the Lord to set a watch before his mouth, and to keepe the doore of his lips.

Confutation of them that thinke it nothing dangerous to speake whatsoeuer: words, they say, are but wind, when a man hath spoken, hee hath done, and so there is an end of that matter. Nay, when a sinfull man hath spoken sinfully, much hurt is done; and so there is but the beginning of a bad matter: for all the mischiefe followeth after. So it may be said of a cup of poyson; it is but a draught, and when a man hath swallowed it, hee hath done with it; and so there is an end: but hath it done with him? will there be no further working of it? it will continue his paine and torment vntill it haue made an end of his life.

Vers. 15. *The rich mans goods are his strong citie: and the feare of the needie is their pouertie.*

THe rich mans goods are his strong citie, &c.] That is, wealthy worldlings doe trust to their possessions when they haue great store. For he speaketh not of any safety that they haue by their goods; but which they seeme to themselues to haue; as is plainely expressed, Chap. 18. 11. They are as an high wall in his imagination: and it is sometimes the fault of good men in their infirmities, to repose too much confidence in outward things, when they abound with them; as euen *Dauid* himselfe acknowledged of himselfe; *In my prosperitie I said, I shall neuer be moued*: Psal. 30. 6. On the other side, the want of earthly substance doth fill the hearts of vnregenerate poore men with feares of famine and miserie. And Gods owne people are not alwaies free from the assaults thereof, by reason of the imperfection of their faith.

*Doct.* The extremitie of euerie state is dangerous, and no condi-

tion

tion ſafe without grace. Of this had *Agur* a ſenſible apprehen- The meane
ſion, when hee put vp that petition to the Lord, that *hee would* eſtate is ſafeſt.
*neither giue him powertie nor riches, but foode conuenient for him*: that is, a moderate eſtate, without exceſſe on either hand: Prou.30.8.

Firſt, both of them bee curſes from God vpon wicked per- *Reaſon* 1.
ſons. Of the one is teſtified, Pſal.69.22. *Let their table be a ſnare before them, and their proſperitie their ruine.* Of the other, *Iob* giueth an example: *For powertie and famine, they were ſolitarie, fleeing into the wilderneſſe, which is darke, deſolate, and waſte:* Iob.30.3.

Secondly, both of them draw their hearts from all good me- 2
ditations, thoughts, purpoſes, and deſires, and fill them vp with fleſhly cogitations.

Thirdly, both of them be occaſions of vniuſt behauiour, pro- 3
curing them by indirect dealing to prouide for themſelues: Pſal.62.10. Prou.30.9.

Inſtruction to labour for the Spirit which will protect vs *Vſe* 1.
from the venome and hurtfull effects, as well of the one as the other. Doth the light of God ſhine on our habitations? hath hee filled our houſes with good things, and giuen vs an ample portion of wealth and poſſeſſions? hath hee prepared and well furniſhed our table, and made our cuppe to runne ouer? Then will the holy Ghoſt prouoke vs; *when we haue eaten and filled our ſelues, to bleſſe the Lord our God for the good plentie which hee hath giuen vs.* Hee will effectually admoniſh vs, that we be not hie minded, and truſt in vncertaine riches; but in the liuing God, which giueth vs abundantlie all things to inioy; that wee doe good, and bee rich in good workes, and readie to diſtribute and communicate, laying vp for our ſelues ſtore againſt the time to come. Are wee in neede and neceſſities, abridged of that fulneſſe which diuers others doe as it were ſwimme in? This holy Spirit will ſuſtaine our hearts, and perſwade vs of our heauenly Fathers all-ſufficiencie of goodneſſe, and abilitie of prouidence and prouiſion for vs. That will teach and inable vs, *in whatſoeuer ſtate wee are, therewith to be content; to be full and to be hungry; to abound and to haue want;* Deut.8.10. 1.Tim 6.17, 18.

to

*to doe all things through the helpe of Christ which strengtheneth vs.* Phil. 4. 12, 13.

Reproofe, first of them that too greedily labour to bee rich, hunting continually both day and night, and at all times, with heart and hand, and tongue, and all indeuour after these dangerous snares, desiring vehemently the curse of God vpon their owne soules. Secondly, of them which by idlenesse, or any other vnthriftie courses, doe cast themselues into penurie and want. When the Lord doth lay pouertie vpon his seruants for a triall or exercise, he doth support them with sundry helpes; hee moueth men to be compassionate towards them; his owne prouidence doth succour them, when men, and strength, and forecast, and all other externall meanes doe faile them. And especially they haue hope, and patience, and all inward supportance, which maketh the defect of outward things easie vnto them. But when men will draw pouerty vpon themselues as a punishment, the mercies and commiserations of men are restrained from them, that none should extend mercy vnto them: Psal. 109. 12. And their hearts being ouercome, are more ready to pursue them with feare and griefe, and discontentment, then all their necessities.

Vers. 16. *The labour of the righteous tendeth to life: but the reuenewes of the wicked to sinne.*

THe *labour of the righteous tendeth to life*, &c.] That is, the goods which good men vsually get by trauel, (though many times they are descended to thē by inheritance, or bestowed vpon them by gift, or by some other lawfull meanes brought to their hands:) *tendeth to life*; viz. both of soule and body in this world, and for the world to come: whereas the riches of vngodly men are alwaies abused by them, and made the occasions and meanes of vnrighteousnesse. The opposition is this: the riches of the righteous doe tend to goodnesse, and so to their life: but the wealth of the wicked doth tend to sinne, and so to their death.

*Doct.* Riches are either profitable or hurtfull, according to the owners

owners, and vſage of them. The proſperitie of *Abraham*, *Iob*, and other holy men is commended in the word of God, for the great good that they did, and receiued thereby: and the Prophets, and other holy writings doe as much condemne the opulencie, and wealth of the enemies of God; as making them to be moſt miſchieuous and miſerable. *Loe their wealth is not in their hand*, ſaith *Iob*: *therefore let the counſell of the wicked bee farre from mee.* And Saint *Iames* willeth the rich men to weepe and howle, for the miſeries that ſhould come vpon them, Iam. 5. 1. Wealth is good, or bad, as it is vſed. Iob 21. 16.

Firſt, the one ſort doe honour the Lord with their ſubſtance, beholding the hand of his prouidence, confeſſing the trueth of his promiſes, aſcribing the glorie to his name, and conſecrating themſelues, and their wealth to his will: the other make idols of their gold and ſiluer, and all their poſſeſſions: or elſe dedicate them to other idols, as pride, and luſt, and voluptuouſneſſe, &c. *Reaſon* 1.

Secondlie, the one ſort giue bread to the hungry, and drinke to the thirſtie, and clothing to the naked, and are euery way readie to relieue the neceſſitie of their poore diſtreſſed brethren: the other abuſe their power and riches to tyrannie and crueltie, oppreſſing them that are alreadie in affliction, or contemning them that are their inferiours, or withholding the goods from the needie, whom God hath made the right *owners of them*: Pro. 3. 27. or elſe feeding gluttons and drunkards, and otherwiſe ſinfull and vnchriſtie perſons. 2

Thirdlie, the one haue for themſelues the prayers of poore Chriſtians, whoſe bellies haue been filled, and their loines clothed and kept warme by them: the others haue the ſighes, and teares, and grones, and ſorrowes of them that be wronged, aſcending to heauen, and making a continuall crie in the eares of the Lord againſt them. 3

Fourthly, the one ſort receiue the bleſſings of God with thankſgiuing, and ſo they are not only wholeſome vnto them, but holy alſo, *being ſanctified by the word and prayer*, 1. Tim. 4. 4. 5. The other deuoure and ſwallow vp the good creatures, like brute beaſts, led altogether by ſenſualitie. 4

5 Fiftly, and laſtly, the one ſort haue laid vp a treaſure in heauen, and ſhall haue the full fruition of it, with greateſt glorie, at the appearance of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt: and the other haue treaſured vp wrath againſt the day of wrath, when all their violence and crueltie ſhall be made manifeſt and puniſhed, and all their neglect of mercie and compaſſion ſhall bee publiſhed to their ſhame and confuſion, before the whole world.

*Vſe.* Inſtruction, to euery man that he doe not onely ſuruey his ſtate to ſee what he hath; but eſpecially to know what hee is: let him not ſo much regard the value and quantitie of his poſſeſſions, as the faithfull and fruitfull imployment of them. If the happineſſe of *Iob* had conſiſted in hauing much, hee could not but haue felt much miſerie, when ſo much wealth was conſumed to nothing: but now hee could recount with comfort, how wealthie and mightie he had formerly been, becauſe hee could truelie relate alſo, how righteous, and merciſull hee had been.

Verſ. 17. *He that regardeth inſtruction is in the way of life: but he that refuſeth correction goeth out of the way.*

HE *that regardeth inſtruction.*] That is, which yeeldeth reuerence, attention, and obedience to the miniſtrie of Gods holy word; *is in the way of life*, hee taketh the right courſe to obtaine euerlaſting ſaluation: *but hee that refuſeth correction*, which will not indure to heare his ſinnes rebuked; *goeth out of the way*, both depriueth himſelfe of eternall life, and walketh towards deſtruction.

The doctrine of this is fit to bee handled in the firſt Chapter, where it is more largely ſet downe by the holy Ghoſt.

Verſ. 18. *He that hideth hatred, is a man of deceitfull lippes; and he that vttereth ſlander is a foole.*

HAuing in the former words declared the perill of them that refuſe admonition, hee deſcribeth here the perſons that

that vſe to doe it, and they are of two ſorts: ſome are hypocrits, that pretend and make a ſhew of fauour and good liking, and yet nouriſh deadly hatred in their hearts: others are profeſſed contemners of that which is taught, but yet picking a quarrell againſt the man that deliuereth it, as though the fault were wholly in him, and iuſt occaſion were giuen to reiect all that he teacheth. But the Lord, which knoweth the ground and roote of their calumniations and cauils, imputeth them to their proper cauſe: and that is, the ſinfulneſſe and follie of thoſe malicious deſpiſers.

The Lord hath hypocriticall diſſemblers in deteſtation. The Prophet *Dauid* maketh mention of ſuch: Pſalm. 28. 3. 4. *Draw mee not away with the workers of iniquitie, which ſpeake friendlie to their neighbours, when malice is in their hearts. Reward them according to their deedes, and according to the wickednesse of their inuentions.* His earneſt prayer to God is to eſcape their hands; for they were very ſubtill, and readie to take him; and verie cruell and violent, if he ſhould come into their clouches. Their trade and occupation was to worke iniquitie, and therefore alſo their wages and hire ſhall bee deſtruction. By all which circumſtances it manifeſtly appeareth, that there is enmitie betweene God and them. *Doct.* 1. A plaine hart pleaſeth God.

Firſt, they are exceeding dangerous, becauſe they treacherouſlie intrap them that truſt them. They know their counſels and purpoſes, and haue all meanes of aduantage againſt them; whereas they would take heede of a profeſſed aduerſarie, and keepe them out of his company, and hide themſelues from him. And that made *Dauid* to crie out vpon the execrable fact of *Achitophel* in conſpiring againſt him, Pſalm. 55. 12. 13. *Surelie mine enemie did not defame mee: for I could haue borne it: neither did mine aduerſarie exalt himſelfe againſt mee: for I would haue hid me from him. But it was thou, O man, euen my companion, my guide, and my familiar.* And ſo doth he find himſelfe much grieued with them that had *ſmooth tongues, as ſoft as oyle, and butter; and yet were as ſharpe and hurtfull as any ſwords.* *Reaſ.* 1.

Secondly, the iudgements of God will declare his hatred againſt ſuch perfidious *Iudaſes*, not onely in executing other 2

punishments vpon them, but euen in bringing to light the falshood and hidden malice of their wretched hearts. As it is said, that *hatred may bee couered by deceit: but the malice thereof shall be discouered in the congregation:* Prou.26.26. Though *Saul* made a faire shew to *Dauid*, cloking his secret mischieuous purpose
1.Sam.18.17. to haue him killed, by giuing his daughter to be his wife: yet now it is notified and made knowne to all nations and posterities.

*Vse.* Instruction, first, to auoid this cursed sinne, that bringeth the curse of God vpon the sinners. Let vs learne to bee plaine hearted towards our brethren; and if ought be amisse in them, let our lippes faithfully admonish them in loue, and not flatter them in hatred. It may bee a courtly tricke to dissemble, but not an honest part to practise it; it may bee agreeable to carnall policie, but it is altogether contrarie to Christian wisedome. Secondly, to bee warie how wee conuerse with such cunning dissemblers; and if wee cannot auoide their companie, yet suffer not your selues to be deceiued by them. It is not want of Charitie, not to giue credit vnto them, but an holy discretion; which the holy Ghost himselfe perswadeth vs to: *Hee that hateth will counterfeit with his lippes: but in heart hee laieth vp deceit. Though hee speake fauourablie, beleeue him not: for there are seauen abominations in his heart:* Prouerbs 26. 24.25.

*Doct.* 2. Railers are fooles. *And he that vttereth slander*, &c.] It is a note of a sinful foole, to haue a bitter railing and slanderous tongue. Our Sauiour reckoneth this amongst many other foule sinnes, proceeding from a corrupt heart, whereby wicked men are defiled: *Out of the heart*, saith he, *come euill thoughts, murthers, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false testimonies, and slaunders:* Matth.15.19.

*Reas.*1. First, they grieuously wrong the partie whose name they traduce: for if a *mans estimation bee of greater value then gold or siluer:* Prou.22.1. then a greater iniurie is offered by them which depraue him in that, than by those that shall robbe him of his goods and spoile him in his estate. Nay, many times the violence that is offered to ones person, is lesse hurtfull than to bee reproched in his name; and therefore they that shew

that

that indignitie, are compared to *hammers*, and *ſwords*, and *ſharp arrowes*: Prou.15.28.

Secondly, they take the way to poyſon the hearts of all that 2
ſhall heare their obloquy, to alienate them from all good inſtructions, when they ſhall raiſe vp rumors, and falſe reports of ſcandalous behauiour againſt the Miniſters of the word; and by this meanes they worke a publike miſchiefe; To keepe many from euerlaſting ſaluation.

Thirdly, they are moſt iniurious to their owne ſoules, exclu- 3
ding themſelues from the priuiledge of Gods people in this life, and the bleſſed ſtate of glory in the life to come: Pſal.15.3.

Inſtruction. If wee deſire the credit of wiſedome, let vs vſe *Vſe* 1.
better meanes to obtaine it, then obtrectations and artificiall diſgracings of our brethren: for that commeth not from aboue; it is no gift of God; it is ſenſuall, carnall, and diuelliſh. Secondly, not to hearken to the reports of ſuch wicked perſons that ſeeke to defame others, and detract from their good name: they are but fooliſh and baſe pedlers that vtter ſuch infectious wares: and therefore they cannot be wiſe chapmen that trafficke with them, and receiue them at their hands. *It is the propertie of the wicked, to giue heede to falſe lips; and liers hearken to naughty tongs:* Prou.17.4.

Conſolation for them that are moleſted and vexed vniuſtly for the Goſpels ſake, by clamorous and falſe accuſers: let them conſider what account God maketh of their malitious aduerſaries; he calleth them fooles, and derideth their practiſes; and therefore in the end it ſhall bee ſeene, that when they haue ſpet all their venome, they haue but ſhot a fooles bolt, and procured ſhame and ſorrow to themſelues.

Verſ. 19. *The ſinne ceaſeth not by the multitude of words: but he that refraineth his lips is wiſe.*

HE ſeemeth ſtill to proceed in the proſecution of the matter ſpoken of in the ſeuenteenth verſe, that men take an euil way for themſelues, which refuſe to be reproued. The words immediately going before theſe, declare how ſome reiect it, by

inward hatred and bitternesse of heart, and yet outwardly make semblance of great loue and friendshippe: others breake out into open profession of their discontentment and malice, by reproching those that would helpe them out of their sinnes: and heere commeth a third sort, which would shift off all rebukes, by denying, defending, cloking, or colouring their faults, by excusing, and extenuating matters that are charged vpon them. But all is in vaine; the sinne will not bee blowne away with breath: and therefore hee sheweth that it is a point of wisedome to giue place by silence, and to take the blame vpon them.

*Doct.* A fault excused, is oft times increased. Ier. 2. 35.

*The sinne ceaseth not*, &c.] The multiplying of words doth make a bad cause rather worse then better. So *Ieremy* telleth the impenitent people, that were very forward to cleare themselues of their sinnes whereof they were accused: *Thou saiest, because I am guiltlesse, surely his wrath shall turne from me: behold, I will enter with thee into iudgement, because thou saiest, I haue not sinned.* Their excuses were accusations; their denials were conuictions; their seeking impunitie without repentance, did hasten and augment their punishment.

*Reason* 1. First, when they defend or make things small trifles, which are vnlawfull to be done, they contradict the word of God and his truth, which no wit, nor art, nor eloquence shall bee able to preuaile against.

2 Secondly, when they hide their facts by deniall, or labour to supply their omissions, by assuming that to themselues which they neuer performed; the eye of the Lord doth behold their falshood, his eares doe heare how vntruly they iustifie themselues; he knoweth all their guiltinesse, and hee will make the world to know their guilefull halting. Though *Saul* failed of obedience to the will of God, yet he arrogated the praise of fulfilling it: though *Samuel* by demonstration declared his sinne; yet hee sought to make an Apology for himselfe, and to lay all the offence vpon the people: but that course tooke none effect; it did him no good for body or soule; it nothing preserued his honour or estate; he was conuicted, and censured, and sentenced, and vtterly cast off, notwithstanding all his excuses.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, their owne conſciences apprehend euerie action and word, and intent of the heart, and the mouer of their whole life: and they will not bee illuded by the fraud of the lippes; but take occaſion thereby to paſſe a more heauie ſentence vpon them. 3

Fourthly, it is a ſinne of it ſelfe to bee giuen to ouermuch talke; as hauing ſelfe liking and raſhneſſe for the rootes thereof: and therefore it cannot poſſibly be a medicine to cure other ſinnes. 4

Inſtruction, to leaue off ſpeaking to men for the mitigation of our tranſgreſſions, and to ſpeake to our own hearts for iudging, and aggrauation of them to the Lord by acknowledgement, that we may be pardoned. *Vſe.* 1,

For this is the way that hath the promiſe: Prou. 28. 13. *Hee that hideth his ſins ſhall not proſper: but he that confeſſeth and forſaketh them ſhall haue mercy.*

Conſolation to them that humbly yeeld to a rebuke without replies, that their ſtate is good, though their actions were bad: they are wiſe now in reſtraining their lippes from ſpeaking of ſinne, though they were fooliſh before to commit it. 2

Verſ.20. *The tongue of the iuſt man is as fined ſiluer: but the heart of the wicked is little worth.*

HE ſetteth forth the excellency of the ſpeech of godly men by compariſon; reſembling it to ſiluer that is purged and fined from the droſſe that was in it: becauſe a good man will be carefull of his tongue, not onely that there be no mixture or filthineſſe and leaudneſſe in his words; but alſo to auoid all ſuperfluous and idle babbling, and ſo to open his mouth with holy wiſedome. Which is contrary in the wicked; becauſe there is a contrarie fountaine in him of ſinfulneſſe and corruption, and no matter of vertue and grace, which are the ſprings of all wholeſome ſpeeches. Thus therefore ſtandeth the *Antitheſis*: the tongue of the iuſt man is as fined ſiluer; becauſe his heart is pretious: but the tongue of the wicked is as droſſe; becauſe his heart is nothing worth.

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*Doct.* 1. Good mens wealth is in their heart, and is vttered with the lips. Mat. 13. 15.

*The tongue of the iuſt man,* &c.] The beſt wealth of a Chriſtian is laid vp in his heart, and diſburſed with his lips. And that is the meaning of our Sauiour when he ſaith, that *A good man out of the good treaſure of his heart, bringeth forth good things.* An euill man may haue coyne, and plate, and Iewels in his treaſurie, and yet haue no treaſure; and may draw mony out of his purſe, and yet haue no good, and doe no good therewithall; but to haue grace in the ſoule, and to vtter gratious words with the tongue, is proper to a good man, and the exerciſe good, and the fruit of it good to himſelfe and others. And albeit heere ſeeme to be a compariſon of equall, as though the tongue were iuſt of the ſame value and worth that fined ſiluer is; yet it is to be vnderſtood, that at leaſt it is ſo pure and pretious, but indeed farre beyond it in excellency.

*Reaſ.* 1. Iames 1. 17.

Firſt, this is one of the good and perfect gifts which is from aboue, and commeth downe from the Father of lights; whereas ſiluer is a terreſtriall matter, euen earth it ſelfe digged out of the earth, and neuer did but grow in the ground.

2 Secondly, this is currant in heauen, and acceptable to God himſelfe; with whom gold and ſiluer are of ſmall eſtimation.

3 Prou. 3. 3. 5. Thirdly, ſuch things are obtained by it, which no money can purchaſe; as wiſedome, and grace, and the aſſurance of Gods eternall fauour, and all other good things that concerne both ſoule and body. *Ezekias*, and *Iehoſaphat*, and other good Kings, could not haue preſerued themſelues by their purſes and treaſures, as they did by their praiers and holy exerciſes of their tongues. *Ionah* could not haue been comforted nor holpen by the greateſt quantity of money, in the Whalles belly; where his prayer was very effectuall. Acts 3. 6, 7. *Peter* could not haue giuen ſo good an almes to the poore creeple, if he had been ſtored with ſiluer and gold, as he did by the efficacy of his words, through the name of Ieſus Chriſt.

*Vſe* 1. Inſtruction: To ſhew our ſelues righteous, by putting away all obſcenitie of ſpeeches; *that neither filthineſſe, nor coueteouſneſs, be once named amongſt vs, nor fooliſh talking, nor ſcurrill, bitter, or vncomely ieſting, or any kind of rotten communication,* as the Apoſtle calleth it; *but onely that which is for the vſe of edifying, that*

*it*

*it may miniſter grace to the hearers:* Epheſ. 5.4. and 4.29.

And eſpecially let vs beware of the droſſe of diſſimulation, vntruth, and falſehoode, which beſeeme not righteous perſons. Make no report for certaintie of any thing that is vncertaine, neither make a promiſe without a ſetled purpoſe, and reſolution of performance. The faithfulneſſe of *Boaz* in this caſe was ſo prooued, and made manifeſt, that when hee had once giuen his word to *Ruth*, *Naomy* biddeth her to build vpon it and not further to trouble her ſelfe: for ſaith ſhe, *The man will not bee in reſt, vntill hee haue finiſhed the matter this ſame day:* Ruth. 3.18.

Conſolation, if good men, notwithſtanding their great infirmities and corruptions, haue yet ſuch ſinceritie in ſpeaking, and ſuch fidelitie in performing that which they ſpeake: how ſhall not the righteous God (in compariſon of whom all men are liars, and who is not ſo properly called true, as truth, and al his words veritie it ſelfe) how ſhall not hee, I ſay, fulfill all his promiſes, and ſtand to his couenants that hee hath made with his people? Hee hath vndertaken for their ſaluation, their maintenance, protection, ſafetie from Satan, deliuerance from tyrants and perſecutors, and ſhall not all this be accompliſhed? is not all pure mettall that he pronounceth? *Is it not as ſilver tried ſeuenfold in the fire?* Pſalm. 12.6. If hee ſhould faile of his word, he ſhould forget his truth; and in forgetting his truth, ſhould forgoe his nature, and conſequently ſhould forfeit his Deitie, which were an execrable thing ſo much as to conceiue. 2

*But the heart of the wicked,* &c.] Though ſinfull perſons make neuer ſo great a ſhew on the outſide, yet there is nothing within them worth any thing. To that purpoſe tend the words of the Apoſtle collected out of the Pſalmes: *The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wiſe to bee but vaine.* If the point had ſtood vpon mans opinion, there might eaſily haue been an error in it: but he bringeth the teſtimonie of God, vpon ſure and infallible knowledge to confirme it. And whereas ỹ Prophet nameth man indefinitely, that is, euery man vnregenerate: Pſal. 94.11. hee ſingleth out the chiefe and choiſeſt of all the ſort of them, whoſe purpoſes ſeeme to bee of greateſt price, and moſt *Doct.* 2. A wicked man hath his worſt ſide inward. 1. Cor. 3.20.

likelie to preuaile, and saith that the thoughts of the wise men best qualified with art, and naturall parts, are not onely vaine, but verie vanitie, as the Psalmist hath it.

*Reasons* 1. First, they are altogether destitute of the spirit of grace.

2 Secondly, the heart of man, without the spirit, is foule, and filthie, and an vncleane sinke of all abominations.

3 Thirdlie, the streames that issue from thence declare what the fountaine is, when all their words, and actions, and recreations, and imaginations are onely sinfull and wicked: Hag.2.15. Tit.1.15. Gen.6.5.

4 Fourthly, Gods proceeding against them in his displeasure maketh manifest how base they are: for hee knoweth how all things are to be priced. Since therfore he reiecteth and casteth them away, it euidently appeareth that there is no goodnesse in them. So saith *Ieremie, They shall call them reprobate siluer, because the Lord hath reiected them:* Ier.6.30.

*Vse* 1. Instruction, not too much to magnifie and admire them, nor too farre to depend vpon them. For better things are not certainely to be expected from them, than are in them. And therfore many times they make golden promises, and leaden performances, because they haue but drossie affections.

2 Consolation, to poore Christians in regard of their portion, notwithstanding they come short of the vngodly in goods and liuings. Many sinners be set vp in state, and much worth in outward wealth, when as they bee worse than bankrupts in their soules, and wholy destitute of all inward substance: and contrariwise though the Saints haue but small store of external riches, yet they be of great possessions in their hearts, and flow with plentie in their inward parts.

Vers.21. *The lippes of the righteous doe feede many: but fooles die for want of wisedome.*

BEfore was declared the excellencie of a good tongue, and well seasoned speech: and here are the effects of it commended, namely, the good that is wrought by it, the soules of many being edified therewith, and receiuing grace, and growth

eth for ſaluation and cõfort,as the body doth obtaine ſtrength, and nouriture, and refreſhing, by their meanes that miniſter wholeſome foode vnto it. And this is illuſtrated by the contrarie effect of wicked,and ignorant perſons, That they are ſo far from feeding others with knowledge and wiſedome, that they ſuffer themſelues to be ſtarued to death & deſtruction,through the want of it.

*The lips of the righteous*, &c. It is the note of a faithfull man, To vſe his knowledge and other good gifts for the benefit of his brethren. In this ſenſe the Apoſtle ſaith, that *though hee were poore,yet he made many rich:* 2.Cor.6.10. His meane eſtate would not permit him,to beſtow monie, or ſuch kind of gifts as wealthie men vſe to diſtribute,becauſe he had no great plentie himſelf: but that which he had moſt of,and others had moſt need of,that he moſt liberally communicated to all that would receiue it,whereſoeuer he came. *Doct.* 1. He is the beſt man that doth others moſt good.

Firſt,godly men doe prouide themſelues of theſe celeſtiall graces,and therby are made able to participate them to others. They haue a learning eare,and therfore alſo a teaching tongue: they be couetous of ſpirituall gifts, and therefore alſo liberall of them: they are great eaters, and(as we may ſay) haue an appetite to deuoure all,and therefore would haue euery man to take part with them.In earthly commodities,men are of a contrarie diſpoſition: for as they are the more greedie of getting to themſelues,ſo are they more niggardly in withholding from others: and as any one doth ſwallow vp more, the leſſe is left for the reſt of the companie: but in heauenly things it commeth to paſſe that none be ſo frank and free, as they whoſe deſires be moſt greedie of hauing: and none doe ſaue, and leaue ſo much for the vſe of their brethren,as they that take their full meale,and eate as much as poſſibly they can. To take the fruition of the graces of God,is the way to make prouiſion of them for our neighbours: and to beſtow vpon others, is the meanes to retaine and augment them to our ſelues. *Reaſ.* 1. 1

Secondly, they haue an vnderſtanding heart,and holie diſcretion to giue to euerie one ſuch a portion, as is fitteſt for the health of his ſoule: ſome are ignorant, and haue neede of inſtructi- 2

ſtruction: ſome are vnrulie, and haue neede of rebuke: ſome are weake, and haue neede to be confirmed: ſome are fearefull and feeble, and haue need of comfort, and incouragement. All theſe duties will a wiſe and righteous man exerciſe, according to the proportion, meaſure and degrees of his wiſedome, and righteouſneſſe.

3 Thirdlie, their lips wil ſend a meſſage to heauen, and deale with the Lord to relieue them, whoſe wants themſelues are not able to ſupplie. And ſo they do not onely feede the ſoules but euen the bodies of very many, when their prayers and prayſes are accepted of God, and made effectuall, for the fruitfulnes of the earth: And to that purpoſe tendeth the prayer of the Prophet, Pſalm. 67. 5. 6. *Let the people praiſe thee, O God: let all the people praiſe thee. Then ſhall the earth bring forth her increaſe, and God, euen our God ſhall bleſſe vs.* To the ſame effect is the exhortation that is giuen by *Ioel* for the healing of the miſeries of his time. *Let the Prieſts, the Miniſters of the Lord, weepe betweene the porch and the altar: and let them ſay, ſpare thy people, O Lord, &c. Then will the Lord anſwere, and ſay vnto his people, behold I will ſend you corne, and wine, and oyle, and you ſhall be ſatisfied therewith.* And by this meanes *Eliah* did feede all Iſrael, by procuring raine, for want whereof they were like to periſh. All *Achabs* wealth, and the riches and power of the whole kingdome were inſufficient for ſuch a worke.

Ioel 2. 17. 19.

*Vſe* 1. Reproofe of them that neuer miniſtred any thing, but infection to their people for their ſoules. No child, no ſeruant, no not the wife of their owne boſome, had euer any helpe by them to ſaluation. Their houſes be nurſeries and ſeminaries of ſwearing, and gaming, and drinking, and all kindes of ſinfulneſſe. An ignorant and vngodly familie ſo allowed, and continued, doth conuince the gouernour to be a ſinner, a foole, and a kind of murtherer of himſelfe, as the other part of the verſe ſheweth, which ſhall bee paſſed ouer now, becauſe it hath been partly handled alreadie, and muſt bee againe hereafter.

2 Secondly, inſtruction to make choice of habitation, and ſocietie with iuſt men: for much commoditie is to bee had in their companie, by the benefit of their fruitfull tongue.

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Verſ. 22. *The bleſſing of the Lord it doth make rich: and he addeth no ſorrowes with it.*

THe purpoſe and drift of theſe words is, to ſhew the preeminence that Gods people haue aboue the men of the world: that whereas the wicked haue nothing but their owne hands, and carnall meanes to truſt vnto for their eſtate; ſuch as be godly, haue God to prouide for them; and his goodneſſe onely doth make rich, and they onely are inriched by him. But becauſe his enemies haue vſually more ſtore of goods then his children; and thereby it may ſeeme, that either men may bee rich without his bleſſing, or elſe that hee is more prouident for ſinners then for Saints; therefore hee ſheweth the difference; That troubles and vexations are intermingled with the goods of the wicked, and his ſeruants are freed from them. Yet it is not ſo to be conceiued, as though no good men had any troubles with their riches; and that whoſoeuer doe find griefe and perturbations in theſe earthly things, were depriued of the bleſſing of God, and teſtimonies of his fauour: but this is the meaning, that ſo farre as he doth beſtowe them, and they depend vpon him for them, ſo farre they eſcape from vexations: ſo that the cares and troubles growe meerely from their owne infirmities.

*The bleſſing*, &c.] As euerlaſting life is the gift of God; ſo is a good and comfortable eſtate in this world. *Dauid* in his thankſgiuing to God, maketh a free confeſſion thereof, ſaying; *Both riches and honour come of thee*, &c. 1. Chron. 29. 12. *Doct.* A comfortable eſtate is a bleſſing of God.

Firſt, neither the commodiouſneſſe of any trade, nor skill, nor ſtrength, nor diligence can preuaile, vnleſſe hee giue ſucceſſe. And therfore the holy Ghoſt teacheth in the Pſalms; that without him, *It is in vaine for men to riſe early, and to lie downe late, and to eate the bread of ſorrow:* Pſal. 127. 2. And therefore *Moſes* giueth that ſerious admonition; *Beware leſt thou ſay in thine heart, my power, and the ſtrength of mine owne hand hath prepared me this abundance. But remember the Lord thy God: for it is hee which giueth thee power to get ſubſtance.* Deut. 17. 18. *Reaſon* 1.

2 Secondly, he alone worketh contentment, which is an high degree of richneſſe.

3 Thirdly, hee giueth a chearefull heart with the portion, and cauſeth them to take their part of their poſſeſſions with comfort: Eccleſ. 2. 24.

4 Fourthly, he preſerueth them from the feares of loſſes whiles they enioy their goods, and from immoderate ſorrow if their ſubſtance bee taken away; as that appeared in the example of *Iob*, who by his patience declared himſelfe to bee as rich when all his goods were gone, as he was at that time when he poſſeſſed them all.

*Vſe* 1 Inſtruction: to vſe the meanes that wee may be bleſſed, and partakers of his promiſes. And that is: firſt, by piety and religion. For ſo runneth the promiſe; *Bleſſed is the man that feareth the Lord, and delighteth greatly in his Commandements. Riches and treaſures ſhall be in his houſe:* Pſal. 112. 1. 3. Secondly, by calling vpon the name of God, and exerciſe of prayer for ſuch things as are needfull for vs. For, the neglect of this dutie, the Apoſtle ſheweth to be the cauſe of their want and needineſſe; Iam. 4. 2. *Ye fight, and warre, and get nothing; becauſe ye aske not.* Thirdly, by the good imployment and vſage of thoſe things which we enioy already, either to his owne ſeruices, or reliefe of his poore diſtreſſed people: *If we honor the Lord with our riches, and with the firſt fruits of all our increaſe, our barnes ſhall be filled with abundance*, &c. Chap. 3. 9, 10. And ſo, *liberall perſons are promiſed to haue plenty:* Prou. 11. 25. Fourthly, by mercy and liberalitie to them that are in neceſſity: Prou. 11. 24, 25. Fiftly, by faithfulneſſe and diligence in our places and callings; as hath been ſhewed in the fourth verſe.

2 Conſolation to ſuch as ſerue him, that they ſhall ſurely bee ſtored with all ſufficiencie. Thoſe whom hee will raiſe vp to wealth, ſhall certainelie riſe, though neuer ſo many ſeeke to hold them downe: for who ſhall hold backe his hands from giuing his owne vnto his owne. How marueilouſly were *Abraham* and *Iacob* enriched among ſtrangers and infidels, not onely aliants from their religion, but vowed enemies to their nation? And where in his wiſedome hee ſeeth it not fit to fill

their

their houſes with amplitude of ſubſtance, hee will make few things to yeelde manie comforts, and ſmall things to bee of great force, and meane things to bee verie precious and excellent. And in this ſenſe it is ſaid, that *A ſmall thing vnto the iuſt man, is better then great riches to the wicked and mightie:* Pſal.37.16.

Terrour for the wicked, that they can neuer be rich: though they haue riches, yet they are not rich, but onely plagued with a multitude of torments and vexations: Eccleſ.2.26. 3

f Verſ.23. *It is a paſtime to a foole to commit wickednesſe: but wiſedome* is the delight *of a man of vnderſtanding.*

IT *is a paſtime to a foole to commit wickednesſe*, &c.] That is, ſinfull men take great pleaſure in doing that which is euill, as if it were a ſport or recreation to them: and it is as much ioy and refreſhing to him that is godly wiſe, both to get wiſedome, and to performe all the good exerciſes thereof.

Sinne is the delight of ſinners; and grace, of good men. Of the one ſort wee haue many teſtimonies in this booke; but in the ſecond Chapter eſpecially, verſe 14. *They delight in doing euill*, and *reioyce in wicked frowardneſſe.* And in the fourth Chapter, verſe 17. it is ſaid; *that they eate the bread of wickednesſe, and drinke the wine of violence: it is meate and drinke vnto them to doe miſchiefe.* Of the other ſort, the Prophet is an example and patterne, in the hundred and nineteenth Pſalme: where, in many places hee profeſſeth his ſingular comfort and delight that hee conceiueth in the heauenly word of God; as when hee ſaith; *How ſweete are thy promiſes vnto my mouth? yea more then honie vnto my mouth. And they are the ioy of mine heart:* Pſal. 119.103.111. *Doct.* Sinne is a paſtime to ſinners, and grace is the ioy of good men.

Firſt, this contrarietie ariſeth from the contrarie cauſes of theſe contrarie likings. All wicked men doe loue ſinne, and it is as deare vnto them as the members of their owne bodies. And all godly men doe loue righteouſneſſe, and rather deſire to be deliuered from life, then ſeparated from grace and the ſeruices of God. Now it is a perpetuall rule which neuer faileth. *Reaſ.* 1.

leth that whatsoeuer any man loueth most, that he will alwaies most delight in. Secondly, wicked men are fleshly; and therefore liue after the flesh, and sauour of the things of the flesh, and delight in the works of the flesh. And godly men are led by the Spirit, and sauour of the things of the Spirit, and reioyce in the fruits of the Spirit.

2 Secondly, it is seene in the contrary effects of both sides. First, wicked men runne violently to sinne, and will not desist from their diuelish purposes, before they haue effected them: though godly men through naturall corruptions and temptations, haue sometimes a proneneſſe and inclination to euill; yet they may be easily retracted by counsell and admonition; as *Dauid* was from slaying of *Nabal*; but they constantly proceede to the performance of euery good dutie. Secondly, wicked men doe meditate in the night, and indeuour in the day to fulfill their sinfull desires. *They worke wickedneſſe vpon their beds, and when the morning is light, they practiſe it; becauſe their hand hath power:* Micah 2.1. Godly men doe meditate in the night, and indeuour in the day to know and obey the holy will of the Lord. As *Isaias* speaketh in the person of all the faithfull; *With my ſoule haue I deſired thee in the night, and with my ſpirit within mee will I ſeeke thee in the morning:* Isa. 26.6. Thirdly, when wicked men haue accomplished their sinfull desires, they surfet with gladneſſe: when they are disappointed, they are filled with bitter vexation. *For they cannot ſleepe, except they haue done euill; and their ſleepe departeth, except they cauſe ſome to fall. For they eate the bread of wickedneſſe, and drinke the wine of violence:* Prou. 4.16, 17. When godly men haue committed sinne, it bringeth anguish vpon their hearts; when they haue performed any Christian seruice, it is a comfortable refreshing to their soules. Fourthly, the custome of sinning is *ſo ſweete* to the wicked, *that they will not forſake it*, but take them for their enemies that shall dissuade them from it; the yoke of sinne is heauie to the godly, that they still striue to bee disburthened of it, and the yoke of Iesus so easie, that they willingly yeelde themselues to it, and account them their best friends, that shall helpe them against the one, and further them to the other.

Iob 20.12.

Con-

Confutation, of the erronious oppinion of thoſe, that allowing themſelues in the purſuit of all ſinfull pleaſures, and profits, euen ſeruing their luſts with delight, and working vncleanneſſe with greedineſſe, doe yet vndertake for the ſafetie of their owne ſoules, and challenge the name, and perogatiue of righteous men. *Vſe* 1.

Conſolation, to them that are wearied with the rebellious motions of the fleſh, that are not able vtterly to ſubdue the remnants of ſinne, and their owne naturall diſpoſition, but that ſometimes their pride giueth them a wound; ſometimes their rage breaketh out ſuddainly, & ſtriketh them ſo, that the prints of the ſtrokes are ſeene, and the ſcarres which remaine after them; ſometimes couetouſnes preſſeth ſo hard vpon them, that it maketh them to giue ground, yea, it taketh, and impriſoneth them: yet if they hate theſe corruptions the more becauſe they haue been hurt by them; if they labour for liberty, and groane for deliuerance out of their captiuitie, they are ſtil reputed wiſe, and the faithfull ſouldiers, and ſeruants of Chriſt. 2

Verſ. 24. *That which the wicked feareth, ſhall come vpon him: but God will graunt the deſire of the righteous.*

THe condemnation in the world to come, which vngodlie men through the guiltineſſe of their conſciences are often ſummonned vnto, when God ſhall draw their ſoule out of their bodie, they ſhall certainly fall into. And thoſe iudgements, and miſeries of this life, which they moſt hate, though they hope to eſcape them, they are in danger to bring vpon themſelues.

And that which is moſt deſirable, and will be moſt comfortable to Chriſtians, the Lord which knoweth what is moſt acceptable to them, and profitable for them, will in due ſeaſon beſtow vpon them.

*That which the wicked feareth, &c.* Whatſoeuer is moſt contrarie to the affection, and liking of ſinfull perſons, that they may expect to bee plagued withall. This the Lord threatned to the rebellious and obſtinate Iewes by the Prophet *Ezekiel*, *I will take from them their power, the ioy of their honour, the pleaſure* *Doct.* 1. That which ill men moſt feare ſhall ſurely befall them.

*sure of their eies, and the desire of their heart, their sonnes and their daughters:* Ezek. 24. 25. The things which they are altogether vnwilling to depart with, those would he strip them of: and consequently, that which they would be very loath to beare, should heauily be laid vpon them.

*Reas.* 1. First, ordinarily they feare that which is the most proportionable, and proper punishment of their offences. As proud men haue nothing in so great detestation, as reproch, and contempt: and nothing is so much due vnto them as to be contemned.

2 Secondlie, their feare and dread of falling into those euils, doth cause them to seeke the preuention of them by euill meanes, and thereby they take the way to inforce the speedie execution of them. As they that would flie farre from necessitie and want, by hastie getting of riches and substance, do very often prouoke pouertie to come swiftly with violence vpon them. For this is the way that hath the promise: Prou. 28. 13. *He that hideth his sinnes shall not prosper: but he that confesseth, and forsaketh them, shall haue merie.*

3 Thirdly, the Lord doth make choice of, and singleth out such maner of iudgements as shal most sting them, and come neerest to their hearts, and those are they which are most terrible to them. What could haue been so grieuous to *Haman*, as first to be made *Mordecaies* page, and then afterwards to be hanged vpon the gallowes; then which nothing could bee inuented more horrible to him, and therfore he had prouided it for *Mordecai* whom he most mortally hated?

Ioel 1. 5. Isa 3. 16. 17. &c.

*Vse.* Instruction, first to fence our selues against the imitation of the wicked, and desire of their state, by considering how wretched and miserable their condition is. Euen presentlie they are arrested, and after a sort apprehended with feares: hell and destruction doe sometimes shew themselues vnto their soules; and in time to come, vnlesse they repent, they shall haue full possession of them. Secondly, to free our selues from all our feares, by flying to the Lord for succour, against the mischiefes which wee would not fall into, and for repentance and humiliation against the sinnes that would draw them vpon our heads.

Read

*But God will graunt, &c.* The best way to haue our willes satisfied, is to be godly. For to such there is a promise made, that *God will fulfill the desires of them that feare him.* Wherein yet these rules are to bee obserued: First, that our will bee agreeable to Gods will, the desire must bee holie, and seasoned with the spirit; and not carnall, and corrupted by the flesh. *Dauid* in a passion would needes know how long hee was to liue. And *Iames* and *Iohn* would haue fire to come from heauen to destroy a whole towne, and another timorous man made sute to bee the second men of the whole earth. These petitions were not graunted, because they were not aduisedly asked, nor safe for them to be obtained. Secondlie, that sometimes lawfull desires are not performed in the same kinde, but exchanged for better, and that which doth more good is bestowed in stead of them. *Moses* desired to enter into the land of Canaan, hee was denied that, but he entred sooner into the heauenly and blessed rest of euerlasting life. *Paul* would haue bin perfectly freed from al originall corruption, or at least from the stirrings, and working of it, but it stood not with the wisedome of God to yeeld that vnto him: but he assisted him with grace against it, which was much more for his owne glory, and the sound comfort of *Pauls* conscience. Thirdly, that we tarry the Lords leasure, and depend on his hand, to minister in fittest time, all those good things which our soules desire, and so wee shall not faile to receiue them, when he seeth that they will bee most expedient for vs.

*Doct. 2.* Good mens desires shall be graunted.

Psal. 145. 19.

First, he raiseth vp the heart to seeke for them, hee enclineth the soule, so much to long after them, and therefore it was his purpose to bestow them. For thereby the Prophet taketh footing for assurance of helpe to Gods distressed seruants, crying vnto him: *Lord, thou hearest the desire of the poore: thou preparest their heart: thou bendest thine eare to them.* Psalme 10. 17.

*Reason* 1.

Secondly, he giueth the spirit of faith and prayer which will haue no nay: they neuer sustaine any repulse; what soeuer they lay hold on, they make their owne. And therefore Saint *Iohn* saith, that *this is the assurance that wee haue in God, that if we aske*

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*any thing according to his will, he heareth vs. And if we know that he heareth vs, what soeuer we aske, we know that we shall haue the petitions that we desire of him:* 1.Ioh.5.14.15.

3 Thirdly, he calleth vs to him by commandement to seeke all good things at his hand, and incourageth vs to the same by promises: and therfore his owne truth is our securitie for them.

4 Fourthly, his al-sufficiencie, and absolute abilitie for performance, doth abundantly exceede all the desires of all the faithfull, yea, of all creatures, though they were neuer so ample and feruent. For hee is able to doe abundantly aboue all that wee aske or thinke, Ephes.3.20.

*Vse* 1. First, consolation to righteous men, against the defects that are in their soules, and the necessities of state, and bodie; they are best prouided for both: for so great is the credit which they haue in the Court of heauen, and their fauour with the King of heauen, that they aske, and haue; desire, and preuaile: and if they be not forward enough that waies, they shal be called vpon to put in their petitions, and inlarge their desires. *Aske*, saith our Sauiaur, *and ye shall receiue, that your ioy may bee full*: Ioh.16.24. *Open thy mouth wide*, saith the Lord, *and I will fill it*: Psalm.81.10.

2 Secondly, terror for their enemies, that by tyrannie and violence compell them to complaine of them. So farre as the Lord is readie to gratifie them by graunting all good things which they aske, so farre is he also prouoked to punish their aduersaries and oppressors that cause them to crie.

Vers.25. *As the whirle winde passeth, so is the wicked no more: but the righteous is an euerlasting foundation.*

THe meaning of the words is, that vngodly men, howsoeuer they flourish for a time, yet do suddainly come to ruine, and destruction; as the whirle-wind swiftlie bloweth ouer, and is lesse constant, and permanent, than the ordinarie winde is, though there bee no stabilitie in any. But when it is said, *they are no more*, he doth not intimate any mortalitie of their soules, as though they should be wholly dissolued as brute beast: for their

their ſoules are euerlaſting as well as Gods people, and their bodies ſhall be raiſed vp againe at the day of the Lord, as well as the Saints: but it is their hope and happineſſe, and not their being that periſheth, they ſhall neuer recouer any good eſtate any more. Now againſt theſe are ſet the righteous, whoſe ſoule and body, and bleſſednesſe, haue a ſetled ſafetie, as a foundation that can neuer bee remoued. So that this is the oppoſition: the wicked are as a whirle-winde, and ſo are no more: but the righteous are like a firme foundation, and ſo perpetually remaine.

*Doct.* Though the ſtate of the vngodly bee more ruffling then the ſeruants of God; yet the ſtate of Gods ſeruants is more certaine and ſtable then the vngodly ones. The whirle-winde mounteth aloft, and toſſeth vp hay, and ſtraw, and ſtubble, and filleth mens eyes with duſt, and commeth violently vpon them with a blu-ſtering blaſt; but immediately it is gone, and paſſed farre away. The foundation lieth low in the ground, & is neither ſeene nor heard; yet there it continueth immoueable for many generations. The vnconſtant and tickle eſtate of wicked men, is fitly expreſſed by liuely compariſons in the prophecie of *Hoſea*; *They ſhall be as the morning cloud, and as the morning deaw that paſſeth away; as the chaffe that is driuen with a whirle-wind out of the floore, and as the ſmoke that goeth out of the chimney.* The contrary firmitude and ſtabilitie of the godly, is by our Sauiour himſelfe likened to an houſe that is built on a rocke: *and the raine fell, and the floods came, and the windes blew, and beate that houſe, and it fell not; for it was grounded on a rocke.*

Vngodly men haue faire ſhewes, but good men haue a firme foundation.

Hoſ.13.3.

Matth.7.25.

*Reaſon* 1. First, the one ſort haue been as vnconſtant in their waies, and as eaſily blowne from ſinne to ſinne, as the chaffe, and duſt, and withered leaues haue been carried vp and downe with the wind: and if they haue entred into any good courſe, there hath been no more ſtedfaſtneſſe in them, then is in the morning cloud and morning deaw: Iſay 64. 6. Hoſ. 6. 4. The other haue rooted and ſetled aſwell in faith, as in all faithfull behauiour: and for theſe cauſes the one ſide flitteth away, and is gone to miſerie; and the other remaine happy and bleſſed for euer.

2 Secondly, the one ſort haue God and his Angels to purſue and puſh them away: the other haue God and his Angels to vphold and confirme them, that they be not moued from the fruition of his fauour.

*Vſe* 1. Terrour for ſinfull men, whoſe ſhort and momentany proſperitie ſhall ſo ſpeedily and ſodainely be turned into miſerie.

2 Inſtruction: firſt, not to affect the pleaſures of ſinne, wherein may bee a continuall expectation of ſuddaine deſtruction. Secondly, not to repoſe affiance in any wicked perſon. For though there were ſome conſtancie in their hearts or mouthes, (which ſeldome or neuer falleth out) yet there is none in their life and eſtate. Pſal. 146. 3, 4. *Put not your truſt in man, nor in the ſonne of man: for there is no helpe in him, his breath departeth, and he returneth to his earth; then his thoughts periſh.*

3 Conſolation to ſuch as are moleſted with the boyſterous tempeſts of wicked men; though they roare loud, they ſhall not rage long; the Lord will put a ſpeedy end to their crueltie. Which was an argument that the Prophet vſed to confirme the hearts of ſuch as were oppreſſed with violence and vexations in his time; *The meeke in the Lord ſhall receiue ioy againe; and the poore men ſhall reioyce in the holy one of Iſrael. For, the cruell man ſhall ceaſe, and the ſkornefull ſhall be conſumed, and all that haſted to iniquitie ſhall be cut off:* Iſai. 29. 19, 20.

Verſ. 26. *As vineger is to the teeth, and ſmoke to the eyes; ſo is the ſlothfull to them that ſend him.*

*Doct.* We muſt be careſull whom we imploy in our affaires.

AS *vineger*, &c.] That is, too much vineger, or other things that be ſharpe and ſoure, doe ſet the teeth on edge; and ſmoke doth bring both ſmart and hurt to the eyes: ſo doth the ſlothfull perſon, or he that is giuen to any other leaud behauior, worke vexation of heart to them that ſend him, or commit matter of moment vnto him.

He that imployeth in any ſeruice vnworthy and careleſſe perſons, ſhall bring ſorrow and moleſtation vpon himſelfe.

There is another Prouerbe which tendeth to the ſame purpoſe, though the ſimilitude be different; as though hee ſhould

cut

cut off his meſſengers feet: ſo he drinketh violence or hurt, that ſendeth a meſſage by a foole: Prou. 26.6. He doth as much iniurie to himſelfe, as if he ſhould maime his meſſenger of his feete, or make him lame of his legs: for as the one in that caſe, ſhould not bee able to diſpatch his iourney; ſo neither can the other well performe the things that are committed to his care and wiſedome. It is a ſpeech that is ordinary in vſe; that he muſt neuer looke to ſpeede well that ſendeth a foole on his errand.

Firſt, there is perill of falſhood and treachery, or of much remiſneſſe and negligence, or want of diſcretion, and skilfulneſſe: by all which there groweth hurt, or loſſe, or trouble to him that putteth him in truſt with his affaires; as *Mephiboſheth* and *Benhadad* found by the ſeruices of *Ziba* and *Hazael*. *Reaſ.1.*

The curſe of God doth vſually accompany the actions and waies of curſed ſinners: and therfore they that aduenture to entertain thē, haue many times a part of the puniſhment with thē. 2

Thirdly, al the faults & abſurdities in word or work, of fooliſh and ſinfull ſeruants, are imputed to the reproche of their maſters that imploy thē; & ſo the ſorrow is cauſed by ſhame & infamie. 3

Fourthly, the contrarie will cleare the truth of this point. For if good ſeruants and faithfull meſſengers, bee for the comfort, and credit, the ſafetie and profit of ſuch as doe vſe them; then they that are altogether of another maner of affection and diſpoſition, cannot but worke another manner of effects and conſequents. 4

Admonition: to bee very heedefull to auoide that noiſome ſinne of ſlothfulneſſe, which bringeth ſo many miſchiefs with it, both to our ſelues for ſoule, and body, and ſtate, and name: and to others alſo; and thoſe eſpecially whom in ſpeciall manner we owe duty vnto. *Vſe.1.*

Secondly, to make a wiſe choice, prouidently of ſuch as wee haue occaſion to vſe in anie buſineſſe, that their induſtrie and diligence, their prudencie and diſcretion, their faithfulneſſe and ſound dealing, may bee a refreſhing, and not a torment to vs. And of the benefit that commeth by ſuch, it is ſpoken in the fiue and twentie Chapter, verſe 13. *As the coolneſſe of ſnowe water* (for that is the meaning) *in the time of* 2

*harueſt:*

*harueſt, ſo is a faithfull meſſenger to them that ſend him; for he refreſheth the ſoule of his maſters.* If we haue obtained ſuch as be not as ſmoke to offend our eyes, but our eyes may behold them and their good behauiour with delight, let vs not bee vineger to their teeth, or ſmoke to their eyes: let not our ſcoureneſſe and diſcontentment, our nigardlineſſe and ouermuch ſparing, be any meanes of their diſcouragement. Deale kindly with them, and be liberall to them, that thou maieſt not onely retaine them ſtill to bee thy ſeruants, but giue all good furtherance to the continuance of their vprightneſſe.

Verſ. 27. *The feare of the Lord increaſeth the daies: but the yeares of the wicked are cut ſhort.*

THe feare of the Lord,&c.] That is, true pietie and religion, with the exerciſe alſo of iuſtice and righteouſneſſe. *Increaſeth the daies;* That is, as a meanes it preſerueth thoſe that are indued with it, from an vntimely death. *But the yeares of the wicked ſhall be cut off.* Their vngodly and ſinfull courſe of life is ſometimes an inſtrument to bring them ſpeedily to their end; as by ſurfets and euill diſeaſes, or falling into the hands of the Magiſtrate, or by quarrelling, and ſuch like. Sometimes it prouoketh the Lord to ſtay them in the middeſt of their race, and not to ſuffer them to come to that age, which by their ſtrength & conſtitution of body they might haue attained vnto. And in this ſenſe the Prophet ſaith in the Pſalmes; that *the wicked ſhall not liue out halfe their daies.* This doctrine of this verſe hath been handled already in the eleuenth verſe of the former Chapter.

Pſal 55.23.

Verſ. 28. *The patient abiding of the righteous ſhall be gladneſſe: but the hope of the wicked ſhall periſh.*

AFter that the children of God haue once imbraced his promiſes, afflictions & temptations do vſually enſue thereupon, that it would ſeeme to ſenſe and fleſhly reaſon, that miſerie and troubles were the only rewards of pietie and obedience, and nothing elſe performed to them that truſt in his word. Now there-

therfore he ſheweth that a better ſtate and condition remaineth for them: that their ſorrow ſhall be turned into ioy, and their mourning into gladnes, when the Lord ſhal deliuer them from troubles, and fulfill all his promiſes. Which is illuſtrated and further amplified by the contrarie caſe of the wicked: which howſoeuer now they ſeeme to haue the preheminence, and are moſt likely to preuaile hereafter, ſhall yet be depriued of their preſent proſperitie, and fruſtrated of all future expectation. This then is the oppoſition: The hope of the righteous ſhall preuaile, and bring them gladneſſe: but the hope of the wicked ſhall periſh, and ſo worke them ſorrow.

*The patient abiding*, &c.] They which depend on God in their afflictions, ſhall in due ſeaſon be deliuered from them. Vpon this ground an exhortation is raiſed in another place of this booke. *Let thy heart be in the feare of the Lord continuallie. For ſurely there is an end, and thy hope ſhall not be cut off:* Prou. 23.17. 18. Though troubles and ſorrowes are in appearance, perpetuall and endles, yet they are but temporary, and come quickly to an end; though hope and poſſibilitie of helpe ſeeme readie continually to vaniſh away, yet it neuer ceaſeth, nor is taken away.

*Doct.* 1. They that in affliction wait on God, ſhall timely finde eaſe.

Firſt, there is nothing in all the world that is more infalliblie aſſured of certaine ſucceſſe, then the hope of Chriſtians. It neuer miſſeth of that which it aimeth at, nor any time diſappointeth them that poſſeſſe it, Rom. 5.5. For faith doth ſupport, and the truth and fidelitie of God himſelfe is the foundation of it.

*Reaſons* 1.

Secondly, that which is long delaied, and much waited for is the more welcome, and acceptable, when it is performed: ſo ſaith the holy Ghoſt. *The hope that is deferred, is the fainting of the heart: but when deſire commeth, it is a tree of life.* The vertue of it cureth all the former faintings, and the delightfull taſte doth ſwallow vp all the ſorrowes. If *Iſaac* had been borne to *Abraham*, or *Iacob* to *Iſaac* the firſt yeere after they were maried, their ioy would haue been but ordinarie, whereas the long barrenneſſe made their births exceeding comfortable to them, as the benefits were memorable to poſteritie.

2 Prou. 13.11.

Thirdlie, the delay doth draw out manie prayers to God,

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and maketh way to attention at the miniſtery of the word, it helpeth meditation, it leadeth to faithfull comforters, it furthereth good cõferences, it procureth all good exerciſes; & al theſe good exerciſes procure a proportionable meaſure of comfort.

Fourthly, it giueth men experience of their faith, & patience, and conſtancy, which all declare & teſtifie the ſoundnes and ſincerity of the heart, which is the root of ſound & holy comfort.

Fiftly, the longer it is before the Lord doth performe his promiſes, the larger his mercies are when he doth beſtow his bleſſings; when he prolongeth his ſeeding, he prouideth a plentifull harueſt; when hee doth not preſently giue the reward, he taketh time to tell out much, that his gifts may be the greater.

*Vſe 1.* Incouragement to patience: in all diſtreſſes, let vs tarrie the Lords leaſure, and wait vpon him; and he hath by word & writing, by ſeale & oath, vndertaken to deliuer vs out of them. Our Sauiour promiſeth, that in ỹ greateſt troubles, when they ſhould be moſt violently, & treacherouſly, and vnnaturally perſecuted, not onely of forraine aduerſaries, but of their domeſticall familiars, of their friends, of their kinſmen, of their brethren, of their owne parents; yet *not one haire of their heads ſhould periſh.* Their haires and heads might be cut off, and life might be taken away, but not loſt: they ſhould not be vainly beſtowed, without good effect in a holy cauſe. Onely hee admoniſheth vs, *to poſſeſſe our ſoules in patience.* If we keepe all ſound within, euery thing ſhall be ſafe both within and without. And then wee begin to loſe our aduantage, when we leaue the poſſeſſion of our ſelues, and the power of our ſoules through diſtempers.

Luk. 21. 18, 19.

Reproofe of them that make more haſte then good ſpeed to ſhake off their croſſes by corrupt courſes. They depriue the Lord of that honor which they ſhould yeeld to him, in waiting for his helpe; and themſelues of that comfort which hee would haue yeelded to them, together with his helpe. Their ioy will wither as corne that is cut downe before it be ripe, and become abortiue as a ſtill-borne child, whereof the mother miſcarrieth.

*Doct. 2.* Ill men ſeeke-ing to be hap-

*But the hope,* &c.] Vngodly men beguile themſelues with a deceitfull expectation of happines. For the ſame point is ſhortly after repeated againe in the next chapter, verſe 7. *When a wic-*

*ed man dieth, his hope periſheth.* When good men enter vpon poſ- pie deceiue
ſeſſion of their happie eſtate, the terme of ſinners is out, & their themſelues.
leaſe determined, and growne out of date.

Firſt, the Lord knoweth their purpoſes, deſires, and expecta- *Reaſon* 1.
tions, and will duely defeate them of the ſame: Pſalm. 1. 6.

Secondly, their hope ariſeth not from faith, nor is grounded 2
on the promiſes of the word, but on ſenſe and ſight of preſent proſperitie.

Thirdly, they hope for things which are altogether impoſſi- 3
ble to come to paſſe. As firſt, to ſee the euerſion and ouerthrow of Gods people. As *Micah* bringeth them in, both vaunting of their expectation, and failing of their purpoſe. *Many nations,* ſaith he to the Church, *are gathered againſt thee ſaying, Now ſhall Zion be condemned, and our eie ſhall looke vpon Zion. But they know not the thoughts of the Lord: they vnderſtand not his counſel; for he ſhall gather them as the ſheaues in the barne:* Micah, 4. 11. 12. They hoped that the Saints ſhould haue been cruſhed and deſtroied becauſe of their preciſencſſe, and pouerty; but God had appointed themſelues to be plagued, and threſhed, becauſe of their malice and wickednes. Secondly, that God ſhould faile of his iuſtice and truth in executing his threatnings denounced againſt them. For ſo the wicked illude themſelues: Deut. 29. 19. *I ſhall haue peace, though I walke after the ſtubbornes of mine owne hart:* Whom the Lord therfore ſaith expreſly, he *wil not be merciful vnto; but* his *wrath & ielouſy ſhal ſmoke againſt them.* Thirdly, to take their fil of ſinful pleaſures here, and to enioy alſo felicity and happines in the life to come. Which is no more poſſible for any to obtain, then was for the voluptuous rich man: Luk. 16. 21.

Confutation and terrors for them that liue ignorantly, and *Vſe.*
impiouſly, and yet truſt to die bleſſedly, and obtaine euerlaſting life. They haue no other euidence for ſafetie from damnation, but their opinion that they haue a ſtrong faith, and whatſoeuer the preachers ſay, they regard it not; they truſt that God will be more mercifull then ſo, they hope to be ſaued as well as the beſt of them all. For ſo their compariſons run: ordinary Chriſtians are too baſe for them to compare with, they muſt equalize themſelues with the chiefe and principall.

Verſ.29. *The way of the Lord is ſtrength to the vpright man: but feare ſhall be to the workers of iniquitie.*

BY the way of the Lord, is meant the whole adminiſtration, both of his word, whereby he maketh his will knowne, and of his ſpirit whereby hee giueth grace, and of his prouidence, whereby he protecteth his ſeruants, and performeth all good things vnto them. By euery one of theſe meanes, doth he eſtabliſh and confirme both the hearts and ſtates of ſuch as be faithfull. But as for the wicked, howſoeuer he ſuffer them for a time to proceed in their vngodly waies without any great croſſes, yet at laſt he executeth ſuch iudgements vpon them, as the very ſight therof cauſeth them to quake and tremble. Thus ſtandeth the oppoſition; The way of the Lord is ſtrength to the vpright, for preſeruation, and therefore it worketh boldnes: but it weakneth the wicked for deſtruction, and therefore it bringeth feare.

*Doct.* 1. *The way of the Lord, &c.* They that are moſt godly, are in beſt ſafetie. The point hath been handled in the firſt verſe of the former chapter, concerning wiſedomes ſeauen pillers.

*Doct.* 2. They that are moſt forward to ſinne are moſt terrified at the ſight of the puniſhment.

*But feare, &c.* They that be moſt bold and ventrous to ſinne, ſhall be moſt frighted with the puniſhments of it. In the.14. Pſalme, the Prophet deſcribing the conceits, conuerſation, and condition of irreligious miſcreants, doth bring them in at the firſt, ſaying, that *there is no God: and therefore they corrupt and do abominable workes:* but afterwards declaring the euent, he ſheweth that *there they are taken with feare*, and as the words are, *they feared with feare*, intimating the greatneſſe of their dread and terror: Pſalm.14.5. An example whereof we haue ſet downe before; namely, the foole-hardineſſe, and cowardlineſſe that was found in *Belſhazzar*, Dan.5.

*Reaſon* 1. Firſt, the great guiltineſſe that is in their conſciences doth diſmay their hearts, and daunt their courages.

2 Secondly, the Lord doth ſhew himſelfe terrible in his iudgements, and they find & feele that they are not able to ſtand before him. And this their ſtate doth the Prophet *Iſaias* deſcribe, Chap.33.14. *The ſinners in Zion are affraid, feare is come vpon*

*the*

*the hypocrites: who among vs ſhall dwell with the deuouring fire? who among vs ſhall dwell with the euerlaſting burning?* 3

Thirdly, their fooliſh flatterie whereby they haue illuded themſelues, hath brought this miſery vpon them. For they preſumed of peace & ſafety, and ſo their deſtruction commeth ſuddenly without reſiſtance: 1. Theſ. 5. 3. And ſo it is ſaid in another place; *They ſhal be taken with feare, where no feare was:* that is, where was no ſuſpicion of feare, or likelihood of danger: Pſal. 53. 5.

Inſtruction: to preuent ſinne by fearing the iudgements that will enſue vpon it: as *Iob* did, euermore making this concluſion with his owne ſoule; that *deſtruction is certaine to the wicked, and ſtrange puniſhments to the workers of iniquitie:* Iob 31. 3. Secondly, to preuent the puniſhments after that we haue ſinned, by a holy voluntary feare and humiliation: 2. Cor. 7. 11. Thirdly, to confirme our ſelues in both theſe, by fearing and trembling at the word of the Lord. The practiſe whereof the Prophet *Habakkuk* profeſſeth in himſelfe; *When I heard, my belly trembled, my lips ſhooke at the voyce, rottenneſſe entred entred into my bones, and I trembled in my ſelfe, that I might reſt in the day of trouble: for when he cōmeth vp vnto the people he ſhall deſtroy them:* Hab. 3. 16. *Vſe 1.*

Verſ. 30. *The righteous ſhall neuer be remoued: but the wicked ſhall not dwell in the earth.*

*THe righteous ſhall neuer be remoued.* They ſhall neuer be remoued from Gods fauour; they ſhall neuer bee remoued from the conſtant graces of the Spirit in their ſoules; or hurtfully, in the way of a curſe, from an outward good eſtate; nor vnſeaſonably be cut off from the earth. Now becauſe ſome of theſe iudgements do ſeeme ſometimes to fall vpon ſome righteous perſons, who for a ſeaſon be eclipſed of grace, & ſeparated from the fruition and comfortable ſight of Gods kindneſſe, and fauour towards them; and their eſtate in appearance is wholly ruinated and ouerthrowne: therefore the word doth well beare it, agreeably to the meaning of the holy Ghoſt, to ſay; that *the righteous ſhall not be remoued for euer.* Though they ſeeme to be caſt downe for a time, yet they ſhall be reſtored againe afterwards

wards. The contrarie is here affirmed concerning the caſe of the wicked, who ſhall certainely fall vnleſſe they repent: they ſhall not continue in that eſtate wherein they are moſt grounded, and haue greateſt eſtabliſhment: they are ſo far from enioying eternall liſe in heauen, as that the vengeance of God will not permit them long to keep their owne breath, or to hold the outward poſſeſſions of the earth. The oppoſition therefore in effect is this; *The righteous ſhall neuer be remoued*, but haue an habitation for euer in heauen; but the wicked ſhall be remoued, and not ſuffered ſo much as to dwell in the earth: the ſenſe is the ſame with verſe 25.

Verſ. 31. *The mouth of the righteous will bee fruitfull in wiſedome: but the tongue of the vnrighteous ſhall be cut out.*

THis verſe agreeth altogether in ſubſtance of matter with the eleuenth; onely the compariſon is altered: for there the tongue of a good man for the conſtant ſtore of holy ſpeeches, was reſembled to a plentifull fountaine; and here, to a fruitfull tree, or fertile field: and there the wicked for leaud ſpeeches, was threatned to haue his mouth ſtopped, and here to haue his tongue cut out: that is, the iudgements of God vpon him for his vngracious and curſed ſpeakings, ſhall ſtrike him as mute and dumbe, as if the tongue were cut out of his head.

Verſ. 32. *The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable: but the mouth of the wicked ſpeaketh froward things.*

THe meaning of theſe words is, that a righteous man knoweth and regardeth what is beſt pleaſing to God for him to ſpeake, and what is moſt grateful to good men to heare, & what doth deſerue acceptation at any mans hand for faithfulnes and truth; and therefore he will vſe his lips to vtter it: but the wicked neither knoweth nor regardeth theſe things; and therefore he vomiteth out onely peruerſe ſpeeches, ſuch as tend to rebellion againſt God, the damnifying of men, and the annoyance and hurt of his owne ſelfe.

The

*The lips.*] It is a point of godly wisedome, for a man to speake as his words may be accepted for his best aduantage. This appeareth by manifold examples of holy men in the Scriptures of God. When the Ephraimites were imbittered against *Gedeon*, and chid with him sharpely; how easily did he still them, abating their spirits with a milde and modest answere? Iudges 8.2. When *Dauid* was in a great rage, comming with a purpose to destroy *Nabal* and his whole family; how readily was *Abigails* mind instructed with vnderstanding, and her lips prouided of prudent speeches, whereby shee presently pacified his displeasure? 1. Sam. 25. 23, 24. This skill also had *Dauid* himself to win the hearts of his people, and to hold them fast vnto him by the wisdome of his words: yea by the force and efficacy thereof, he made the heart of bloody *Saul* his cruell and implacable enemie for a time to relent. What shall we say of *Paul*, who knew what words would draw his mortall foes to turne after a sort to be his friends; his persecuters to preserue him; the Priests and Pharises to stand for the defence of the Apostle of Christ?

*Doct.* He speakes wisely, whose words make most for his aduantage.

First, the word and Spirit of God doth informe his seruants in this knowledge, and giue them discretion to apply themselues to the state of the persons and season. For that which the Prophet speaketh of himself, is in some degree verified of euery other godly person, according to his place and occasions. *The Lord hath giuen me a tongue of the learned, that I should know to minister a word in time to him that is weary:* Isa. 50. 4. *Reas.* 1.

Secondly, the vse and exercise of gracious and religious speeches doth bring a dexteritie, to iudge what is most meete to be spoken, and to deliuer the same in the aptest manner: and so (as trained souldiers) they are in a continuall readinesse, vpon due occasion, to deale with God and all sorts of people. And therefore the Colossians are exhorted by the Apostle, to the diligent and constant vse of the same; *Let your speech be gracious alwaies, and powdred with salt, that ye may know how to answer euery man:* Col. 4. 6. 2

Confutation of all popish praiers which are offered without any assurance of acceptance; and consequently it conuinceth all popish persons to be vnrighteous men, because they know not *Vse* 1.

what

what is acceptable: for ſo much they plainely declare, when they pronounce they know not what in a ſtrange language; when they call vpon the dead, which heare them not at al; when they entertaine ſtrange aduocates to vſurpe Chriſt his office; when they aske things needleſſe; as the ſaluation of ſuch as are actually and abſolutely ſaued: when they aske things which are booteleſſe; as the deliuerance of ſuch as are irrecouerably damned. And their beſt apology for theſe things is; that if they doe no good, they will doe no harme: whereby they make profeſſion, that they are vncertaine whether their praiers bee like to pleaſe God, or otherwiſe be vaine and idle.

2 Reproofe, with terror for them whoſe mouthes ſpeake froward things, which may know that their words are gratefull to none but the diuell and damnable men, who wittingly and willingly, and ſpitefully with greedy deſire, do belch out ſuch bitter blaſphemies and other curſed ſpeeches, as may offend the maieſty of God, and grieue the hearts of his children: which they doe of purpoſe, to profeſſe that they are neither ſeruants to the one, nor members of the other; but vowed enemies of both: but doe they prouoke the Lord to wrath, and not themſelues to the confuſion of their owne faces? do they aſſault the glorious name of God, and ſtrike at him with their virulent and venomous tonges; and ſhall not he ſet vpon them, and deſtroy their ſoules and bodies with his grieuous plagues and fearefull iudgements? Euen this is a principal cauſe, together with whordome, and other ſinnes of death, that caſteth ſo many into the magiſtrates hand, and bringeth them to an ignominious end, for ſtelth, and robberies, for murthers, and moſt helliſh and abominable treaſons.

3 Conſolation to them that order their lips aright; they ſhoot not at an vncertaine marke; they may as well know how they ſhall ſpeede, as how they ſpeake, though their counſels or rebukes be not ſometimes well taken of men; yet at all times they are pleaſing to the Lord, who will alſo requite them with a glorious and bleſſed reward.

*FINIS.*

# TO THE RIGHT WORSHIPFVLL WILLIAM FENYS Eſquire, and Sir WILLIAM COPE Knight, grace, *mercie and peace*.

THE due regard which wee haue of you both, for the ſpeciall gifts wherewith it hath pleaſed God to grace you; hath moued vs to preſent vnto you ioyntly this teſtimonie of our vnfained loue. We doe the rather publiſh this Treatiſe vnder your names, becauſe we would encourage you, to runne forward conſtantly in that Chriſtian race which you haue alreadie ſo happilie begunne, and to anſwere that good expectation which is generally and iuſtly conceiued of you. We haue long waited and much deſired to be imploied againe as formerly (through Gods mercie) wee haue been. But being hitherto diſappointed of that hope, and eſteeming an vnprofitable life, to be a kinde of vncomfortable death; we thought it our bounden dutie to offer our ſeruice to the Church, and furtherance to your faith, in the beſt manner wee can, ſince wee may not vſe

such meanes as we would. As you haue been attentiue hearers whiles we preached, so (we doubt not) but you will be diligent readers of that which is here written. We shall esteeme it a sufficient gaine for our trauaile, if either your selues, or any other, may reape fruit by our labours. The God of all mercie increase his graces in vs all, and multiplie his blessings vpon vs, that our life and death may bring glorie to him, and euerlasting peace to our owne soules.

Your Worships in all Christian duties to be commanded,

*Iohn Dod, Robert Cleaue.*

# TO THE GODLIE READER.

CHristian Reader, by meanes of our promiſe, we are growne into thy debt, which if God adde abilitie to our willingnes, thou ſhalt finde vs as readie to diſcharge. And for thy better aſſurance of our faithfull meaning herein, we haue communicated vnto thee our labours on theſe two Chapters, in part of paiment, vntill we can proceede to the reſt. Onely this we muſt intreate of thee, that thou wilt deale with vs, as thou wouldeſt with iuſt and honeſt debters which duely pay thee money. If our coyne be currant, carrying trueth and veritie, the ſtampe of Gods holy ſpirit, reiect it not though it be duskiſh, without glittering ſhew, or curious workemanſhip. But if ought by miſtaking hath eſcaped vs that wanteth weight, or prooueth not good mettall, returne it louingly and in brotherly manner vnto vs, and we will doe our beſt indeuour to yeelde thee better matter for it. The eight firſt chapters a godly learned man hath trauailed in, whoſe paines we expected before this time to haue inioyed with thee, and that cauſed vs to goe forwards, omitting the beginning, vntill we come to the end. The methode, we confeſſe, would be very prepoſterous and defectiue, were it not that

*ſo good a ſupplie would reduce it into due order. And ſo we commit the whole worke both of our writing, and thy reading, to the direction and bleſsing of Gods holy ſpirit, whom we pray to giue thee vnderſtanding to know his will, with a faithfull heart to beleeue and obey the ſame, through Ieſus Chriſt, Amen.*

Drayton this ſeuenth of Nouember. 1606.

Thine in all Chriſtian duties,

*Iohn Dod, Robert Cleaner.*

# AN EXPOSITION OF THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER OF THE PROVERBS.

## CHAPTER. XI.

Verse 1. *False balances are an abomination to the Lord: but a perfect weight pleaseth him.*

Vnder false balances are comprehended all vniust weights, lines, and measures. And therewithall is condemned whatsoeuer kinde of guile, and deceit may bee found either in the buyer, or seller. As when that which is sold is defectiue either in quantitie, or qualitie, not being fit for the vse that it is bought for, or not correspondent to the price that is paid for it, or not answerable to the testimonie that is giuen of it. And with these doth *Amos* charge the wicked wealthy men of his age: *They make the Epha,* or measure *small, and the shekell,* or price *great, and falsifie the weights of deceit. That they may buie the poore for siluer, and the needie for shooes, and sell the refuse of their wheate.* Amos 8.5. So on the other side in the buyer, when he shall faile of all meete proportion betweene the price that he payeth, and the commoditie that he buieth, giuing farre lesse than the worth and valew of it. And where it is said, *They are abomination to the Lord,* it is

not meant that his quarrell is against the insensible creatures, but he is displeased with the iniquitie of the persons, which make, vse, keepe, or allow them. Whereby the other clause may be better vnderstoode, that the Lord is pleased with such as doe vprightly vse them, and with loue of equitie, exercise it in their traffique, and couenants.

*Doct.1.* All instruments and meanes of falsehood are hatefull to God. If God speake this but once, and in one place, and no where else but in this place, yet he is of sufficient authoritie to require credit to his word, because he that cannot lie, hath spoken it, who also knoweth best both what doth offend, and please him: but hee doth often confirme it in the scriptures, that the multiplicitie of testimonies may the more forcibly perswade vs to beleeue. The selfesame words in effect are not onely repeated, but redoubled in this booke, and that sometimes in one chapter. *Diuers weights, and diuers measures, both these are euen an abomination to the Lord. Diuers weights are abomination to the Lord, and false ballances are not good:* Cap.20.10.23.

*Reasons.* First, his commandement is hereby violated: for he hath ex-
Deut.25.15.16 pressely forbidden such vnrighteous dealing. *Thou shalt not haue in thy bagge two manner of weights, a great, and a small, neither shalt thou haue in thine house diuers measures, a great, and a small; but thou shalt haue a iust weight: a perfect, and a iust measure shalt thou haue. &c. For all that doe such things, and all that doe vnrighteously, are abomination to the Lord thy God.* Which is not so to be vnderstood, as though it were absolutely vnlawfull to haue diuers sorts of weights or measures, as ounces, and pounds: as yards, and elles: as pecks, and bushels, &c. Neither yet to haue many of the same sort: for many may be needefull, according as men haue manifold occasions to vse them: but to haue them vnequall each to other, which ought to be of the same size, as some of larger content to buy with, and others of lesser quantity to sell with, this is that which is here prohibited.

2 Secondly, his ordenance by this is inuerted: for he hath instituted the vse of negotiation, market, and exchange, for the mutuall benefit of both sides, and this is for the good of neither: for the one is endamaged in his purse, and the other in his conscience.

ence. He would haue commerce and traffique to proceede from loue, to be exerciſed in loue, and more to increaſe loue: and this courſe is altogether contrarie to loue, and a meanes to ingender vnkindnes, and hatred. Hee requireth that iuſtice and equitie ſhould moderate theſe affaires, and *that no man ſhould oppreſſe or defraude his brother in any matter:* but here is filthie lucre moſt reſpected, and followed, and our brethren wronged, and beguiled. 1.Theſ.4.6.

3 Thirdlie, this ſinne is ſo much the more lothed of God, by how much it is better liked of them that practiſe it. Their cloſenes, and cunning, in acting of it, doth for a time augment their wealth, and not impaire their credite, & therfore they count their courſe lawfull, and themſelues happie for ſuch proſperous ſucceſſe: becauſe man findeth no fault with them, they thinke that God findeth no falſehood in them: and ſeeing, yet they haue no puniſhment inflicted vpon them, they dreame alſo that no wickednes is committed by them. For ſo the Prophet complaineth: *Hee is a Merchant; the ballances of deceit are in his hand: hee loueth to oppreſſe. And Ephraim ſaid, notwithſtanding I am rich: I haue found me out riches in all my labours: they ſhall finde no iniquitie in me, that were wickednes.* Hoſ.12.7.8.

*Vſe* 1. Admonition not onely to forbeare all fraudulent, and wrongfull dealing, but with hatred to deteſt it, and with horror to flie farre from it. That which is hurtfull to our brother is hatefull to God, and therefore can neuer bee helpefull to vs. If he iudge it vnrighteous we ſhall finde it vnprofitable: if it be damnable in his ſight, and therefore his ſoule doth hate it, it will at laſt be in our ſenſe, and our ſoule ſhall rue it: It may bring monie and wealth, and raiſe vp mens ſtate, and family, but it will draw downe iudgements vpon familie, ſtate, and wealth, and monie, and make all to be execrable. For that which is ſpoken in an other caſe, is alſo verified in this: *Bring not abomination into thine houſe, leſt thou bee accurſed like it, but vtterly abhorre it, and count it moſt abominable, for it is accurſed.* As the gold, and ſiluer, and other coſtly matter, whereof the idols were made, and wherewith they were adorned, was execrable in reſpect of impietie; ſo is this trade of getting, and riches ſo gotten in regard of iniquitie. And therefore both Deut.7.26.

are very offensiue to the Lord: both are pestilent to mens families: both are perilous to their state: both are pernicious to their soules. For a cursed possession may make the person accursed, and bring the whole house to desolation. Which should perswade men not onely to make stay of getting goods vniustly, but to make no stay of ridding their hands iustly thereof. For as they sinne grieuously which indirectly receiue that which is none of their owne; so doe they also that retaine it, and restore it not to the right owner. And therefore in *Micah* it is set as a note of sinners, and such as are obstinately sinfull, and which conceiue of God as a patron of their sinfulnesse, that vpon admonition giuen vnto them from the Lord, would not reforme their falsehood.

Micah. 6. 10. *Are yet the treasures of wickednesse in the house of the wicked, and the scant measure that is abominable? Shall I iustifie the wicked ballances, and the deceitfull weights?*

2 Reproofe and terror of gamesters, and those that make Dice, Cardes, and Boules, with such like instruments of iniury, to be the measures of their trade, and the meanes of their maintenance. Thereby are they made as odious to God, as infestuous to men, and as great aduersaries to equitie, as they which by false weights doe wrong their chapmen. They being ashamed to appeare in their practise, doe secretly defraud men like theeues that filch in a corner: but these impudently glorying in their sinfulnesse, doe openlie professe their purpose, like robbers that commaund mens purses by the hie way side. They take the way to bring some part of their neighbours goods to their hands, by receiuing much for a little: but these striue to draw euery part to themselues, by getting all for nothing. And for this cause whatsoeuer successe they haue, howsoeuer the world goeth with them, they speed vnhappily. If they winne other mens mony, they lose their blessednes, and Gods gracious fauour: If they lose their owne monie, they get a curse, and Gods grieuous displeasure.

*Doct.* 2. But a true weight, &c. The Lord doth not onely respect the pietie which is vsed in his owne worship, but the trueth and iustice that is performed to men.

When the Lord himselfe is asked what manner of men *should* dwell

*dwell in his tabernacle, and rest in his holy mountaine*, that is, which should haue a good estate here, and an habitation for euermore in heauen, he describeth them by their innocent, and harmeleſſe behauiour towards their brethren. *Hee that walketh vprightly, and worketh righteouſlie, and ſpeaketh the trueth in his heart.* Hee, certenlie, regardeth that worke which hee ſo largely rewardeth with ſuch wages: and hee is well pleaſed with that perſon in this life, whom he will receiue to life euerlaſting: and equall it is with him, that they which conuerſe with earthly people in righteouſneſſe, ſhould alſo continue with heauenlie ſaints in glory. Pſalm. 15. 2.

*Reaſons.*

Firſt, they doe ſeruice herein to God himſelfe; for in conſcience of his will, and obedience to his word they giue themſelues to this vprightneſſe.

2 Secondly, it is his owne worke, and proceedeth from himſelfe: for all righteouſneſſe is the grace, and fruite of his holie ſpirit. As fleſh and bloud, with nature, and reaſon did neuer yet beget any ſound pietie, and religion; ſo it neither will, nor euer can direct any mans heart to true iuſtice, and righteouſnes.

3 Thirdlie, trueth both in word and deed is a part of his glorious image, whereby his people are confirmed, and made like vnto him, and therefore he cannot but take delight in that which is ſo agreeable with his owne nature, and a liuely repreſentation of himſelfe.

*Vſe.* Conſolation to them that doe conſtantly, and conſcionablie addict themſelues to the exerciſe of equitie. None hath truely learned this, but ſuch as haue been apprentices in heauen, whom the Lord hath informed in the myſterie of this trade. *Ob.* But manie others gaine more monie, and thriue faſter, and grow greater then they doe. *Sol.* But they gaine more comfort, and thriue better, and grow happier then all others doe. For howſoeuer it fareth with their ſtate for quantitie of earthly poſſeſſions, it cannot but goe well with their ſoules, for plentie of heauenlie graces, and though paraduenture they haue preſently but little ſubſtance in their houſes, yet there remaineth from them an ample treaſure in the heauens: and that which is beſt for thē, is moſt firmely aſſured to them, which is Gods euerlaſting loue and fauour. Albeit therfore thy vocation bee meane and of no great account, and thy

ſtocke ſlender and of no great value, thy returne ſeldome, and of no great commoditie; yet if thou bee faithfull in a meane trade, with a ſmall ſtocke, and a ſlow returne, all ſhall bee acceptable, all ſhall be profitable, all ſhall be comfortable. So often as thou haſt mans cuſtome to buy, or ſell with thee, thou haſt Gods companie to reward and bleſſe thee; and whenſoeuer thou dealeſt well with any, he takeh notice of it, to deale better with thy ſelfe.

Verſe 2. *When pride commeth, then commeth contempt: but with the lowlie is wiſedome.*

WHen *pride commeth*] that is, when it groweth to maturitie, hauing power to puffe vp mens hearts, and ſhewing it ſelfe in words, or works, in countenance, apparell, or geſtures, *then commeth cõtempt*, that is, ſhame then approcheth, and is neere at hand, matching in the next ranke after this loſtie hart, and inſolent behauiour. As is to be ſeene in manie who hauing bin firſt lifted vp in their owne haughtie minds, were afterwards caſt downe by Gods righteous iudgmẽts, either into phrenſies, or groſſe ſins, or ruine of ſtate, or obloquie for their former hidden faults now publiſhed at laſt to their great diſgrace. The other part of the antitheſis, containing the honour that doth accompanie humilitie, is argued by conſequent, in this manner: when pride commeth, then commeth follie, which euer bringeth ſhame: but when humilitie commeth, then commeth wiſedome, which is neuer without glorie.

*Doct.1.* Pride is a forerunner of ſhame and reproach. It is a common prouerbe ordinarie in the mouth of the people: Pride goeth before, and ſhame commeth after. And it is an holie prouerbe often vſed by *Salomon* in this booke: *Pride goeth before deſtruction, and an high mind before the fall,* Pro.16.18.& 18.12. And it is a ſelect prouerbe often vſed by Chriſt in the new Teſtament; *Whoſoeuer exalteth himſelfe ſhall be brought lowe, and he that humbleth himſelfe ſhall be exalted.* Luke.14.11.

We ſee in buildings that when walls waxe thicker by hollownes and ſwelling, they will ſhortlie come lower by downefall and ruine; and ſo ſtandeth the caſe with all proud perſons, their great

great heart doth threaten some great mischeese to be nigh vnto them. Which may bee exemplified by diuers presidents in the scriptures, which are proposed as real examples, for euery man to take warning by. When *Nebuchadnezzar* was bragging of his Babell which he had built for his glorie, he was banished from all habitation, not hauing so much as a cottage, and like a beast made to liue among the beasts in the fields, with ignominie. When *Haman* thought to ride on horseback and to be waited on like a King, hee was driuen to lackie on foote, and to waite attendance like a page: and purposing to hang *Mordecay* on high to honour himselfe, he prepared an high gallowes to bee hanged on himselfe. When *Herod* thought himselfe good enough to take vpon him the state and honour of a god, the Lord declared him to be bad enough to be deuoured of contemptible vermine.

First, they haue God to bee their enemie, *he resisteth them*, and *they are all an abomination vnto him:* not onelie some arrogant fellowes that haue proud hearts and beggars purses, but euen such also as sit vpon princely thrones, and beare kingly Scepters, and weare imperiall Diadems. And if he see them to be abomination, and doth therefore abhorre them, they shall appeare abominable, and men will despise them. *Reasons.* Iam.4.6. Prou.16.5.

Secondly, they are fooles, as the text it selfe intendeth, and therefore cannot but behaue themselues foolishlie, *like drunkards which are ouercome with wine.* They are sinfull fooles, more destitute of grace then of wit. For prowd behauiour is the foame or froath that proceedeth from much wickednes, and a proud heart is a prison wherein they are withheld from comming to repentance. And so their owne follie, and Gods wisedome; their owne sinfull waies, and Gods righteous iudgements, their owne impenitencie, and Gods seueritie will bring them to the possession of their inheritance, and that *is shame and dishonour, how highlie soeuer they haue been exalted.* Prou.3.35. 2 Hab.2.5.

Thirdlie, they are sacrilegious persons, and robbe God of his glory, which is most proper and pretious vnto him, and therefore it is equall that he should shippe them of the honour which is so much desired of them. 3

Reproofe of their follie that vse pride as a stirrop to mount vp thereby *Vse.*

thereby to promotion and credit, that thinke it the onely way to preferment, if they can set forth themselues with some ostentation, and lift vp their eye-brows aboue their brethren. And this is growne almost to an vniuersall contagion, wherewith the greatest number of states and ages, of sexes, and persons in all places, are dangerously infected. Some thereby seeking to be admired, others to be aduanced, many to be feared, and al to be better satisfied in the accomplishment of their desires. But how manie loose by seeking, and sinke, by aspiring, and runne into reproch by hunting after vaine estimation? whiles they leaue their standing, and would rise aboue the toppe of their places, they faile of their footing, and fall downe to the bottome.

2 Instruction to be as much afraid of pride, as of shame, and euen of secret conceitednes within, no lesse thē of open discredit without, and therefore to vse al good remedies to cure this dangerous inflamation of such a windie stomacke. And first for this purpose let euery man take heede that he bee not illuded with the glosses and colourable appearances of knowledge and wisdome, or anie other good parts of nature or grace in himselfe, when in trueth they are nothing but shews and shadowes. For diuers by an ouerweening conceit haue themselues in hie admiration, when others to whom they are better knowne, haue them in great derision. And albeit others either in flatterie, or good opinion should commend vs for those good things which wee are priuie to our selues not to be in vs, yet let vs not receiue the doubtfull testimonie of straungers against the euident witnesse of God and our owne consciences. For this were as absurd as if a needie creature pinched with penurie, and almost hunger-starued, should bee brought to beleeue that he swimmed in plentie and were a liberall house-keeper, hauing his table alwaies furnished with varietie of dishes; or one deepelie indebted, and readie to breake for want of abilitie, should bee induced to thinke himselfe the onelie monied man in the countrie, sufficient in wealth to lend and to giue to many others. Secondlie, when God hath graced any with excellent gifts which are not adulterate, and counterfeit, but such as are currant, and able to abide the touchstone, and to hold weight in the ballance, yet as they feele what they haue, so let them

them find what they want: as they ſee their graces and vertues, ſo let them ſearch into their corruptions, and vices: as they haue a good conſcience in the performance of many good duties, ſo let them conſider the innumerable ſinnes that they haue committed, the multitude of ſeruices which they haue neglected, the hypocriſie, infidelity, vnchearefulneſſe, and other imperfections that haue ſtained their beſt words and actions: and theſe will helpe to hold downe their hearts in humilitie, and take away all matter of glorying. For the beſt in the world ſhall haue cauſe to bluſh and hang downe their heads, if they make compariſon betweene that they are, and that which they ought to be. Though thy knowledge bee great, yet how much art thou ignorant of that thou mightest haue knowne, if thou hadſt been as diligent to ſeeke it, as God was to offer it vnto thee? Though thou haue faith, and loue and repentance, and by vertue thereof doeſt ſhew forth the fruites of the ſpirit in holie obedience, yet how ſmall time haſt thou ſpent, how ſoftlie haſt thou trauailed, and how little ground haſt thou gotten in this way that leadeth to eternall life? But in the courſe of ſinfulnes diddeſt thou not begin the race ſoone, and runne ſwiftly, and come backe againe ſlowlie? Thirdly, it will much diminiſh a ſelfe-liking, and too great opinion of our owne excellencie, if wee turne our eyes without enuie to the excellent graces of knowledge and diſcretion of zeale, and moderation, and of all other amiable gifts of our brethren, wherein they goe beyond vs. And this is the receipt which the holie ghoſt preſcribeth to the Philippians againſt this verie maladie: *Let nothing*, ſaith he, *bee done in contention, or vaine glory, but in meekenes of* Phil.2.3.4. *mind, let euery one eſteeme others better then himſelfe. Looke not euery man on his owne things, but euery man alſo on the things of other men.* Laſtlie, conſider the hand which miniſtreth euery good thing that we enioy, whether it bee gift of nature, or of grace, or of outward poſſeſſion; whether it concerne the bodie, or the minde, the ſtate, or the dignitie. *All is of God, all is from God, and all is for God, and therefore let all the glorie be giuen to God. What haſt thou*, ſaith S. *Paul, that thou haſt not receiued? If thou haſt receiued it, why glorieſt thou as though thou haddeſt not receiued it?* 1.Cor.4.7. It becommeth not a beggar that liues of the almes

basket to bragge of his meate, nor insolentlie to compare with him, or his, that relieueth him in his miserable necessitie.

*Doct.2.* *But with the lowlie*] Euerie humble man is also indued with wisedome. Lowlie and wise bee so farre conuertible as that the one can neuer be affirmed of any, without the other: the habit of humilitie doth inferre the possession of wisedome, and the want of either doth euict the priuation of both.

*Reasons.* First, the fountaine from whence lowlinesse floweth, doth alwaies in the same current send forth the streames of wisedome. The Lord Iesus doth neuer deriue to any the power and ability of subduing his heart, but he giueth him also sound knowledge how to obtaine it, and holie vnderstanding how to vse it.

2 Secondly, God himselfe is the instructour of all humble persons, and frameth their hearts to be teachable, that they shall not faile to learne of him, and therefore must needs receiue wisedome from him. This is agreeable to the promise which hee maketh, Psalm. 25.9. *Them that bee meeke will he guide in iudgement, and teach the humble his way.* He giueth grace and guidance with his precepts, for minde, and heart, for knowledge, and affection, for will, and conscionable practise.

3 Thirdly, the happinesse which they procure to themselues doth giue a cleere testimonie of their wisedome. They enioy the fauour of God, and the friendship of Gods people. In their hearts they haue peace, ouer their affections they haue power. They are alwaies in the way of preferment, either to come to honour in a great place, or for honour to come to them in a meane place. For euerie state they are fitted: whiles they are to be tried with aduersitie, they can beare it without impatiencie; when they shall be Psalm.37.11. called to prosperitie, they can vse it without insolencie: as long as they continue in this world they are rightfull possessours of the earth; as soone as they depart to an other world, they shall be glorious inhabitants of heauen. In which respects the spirit of God saith, that *it is better to be of an humble mind with the lowlie, then to deuide the spoiles with the proud,* Prou.16.19. The meanest and most afflicted vnderling that is humble and meeke, is in farre better case then the mightest and most puissant conquerour that is proude and haughtie.

Reproofe

Reproofe of ſuch as deride their ſimplicitie for vndergoing ſo manie moleſtations, and charge them with follie for not facing out matters with an impudent countenance, and condemne them of madneſſe, becauſe they ſecke not pompe and earthlie excellencie. But it is not becauſe the humble want wiſedome, but becauſe wiſedome ſeemeth fooliſhneſſe to fooles, and ſuch as are deſtitute of vnderſtanding. They looke vpon their troubles, but ſeele not their comforts: they ſee their perſecutions, but foreſee not their deliuerance: they behold their preſent condition in afflictions, but diſcerne not of their happines to come in glorie. *Vſe.*

Inſtruction to make moſt account of their counſels and companie, ſeeing they are beſt of all ſtored with wiſedome and knowledge. None are ſo well able to giue aduice as they: for though others may haue more countenance and greatneſſe, yet they attaine not to ſo much counſell and goodnes. None are ſo readie to giue aduice as they: for they doe it moſt willingly, and cheerefullie, with all mildneſſe, and kindenes. None are ſo much bleſſed in the aduice which they giue as they: For their prayers are forcible with God, and Gods preſence is effectuall with them for aſſiſtance in ſuch acceptable ſeruices. 2

Verſe 3. *The vprightneſſe of the iuſt ſhall guide them: but the frowardneſſe of the tranſgreſſours ſhall deſtroy them.*

BY *vprightneſſe* is not meant an extrauagant well meaning without further rule or warrant, as though good intents were competent guides of our waies to ſaluation: but the ſinceritie of an heart faithfullie, though not perfectlie willing to beleeue and obey that which it knoweth, and reſolutelie, though not abſolutelie, deſirous to know that which God ſhall reueile vnto it. Now this is ſaid *to guide righteous men*, that is, ſhall procure good direction from the Lord, both for his ſeruice, and their owne happines, and make them tractable to follow the ſame. Contrarie to this is the condition of the wicked, who are not ledde with vprightneſſe, but carried with peruerſeneſſe, and therfore miſled by the ſame to their vndoing. For thus ſtandeth the oppoſition: the vprightneſſe of the iuſt ſhall guide them in the way, and ſo pre-

ſerue them: but the frowardnes of the wicked will keepe them from the way, and ſo deſtroy them.

Doct.1. *The vprightneſſe*] Euery one that is truely godlie hath a faithfull guide and counſellour in his owne breaſt. A ſound heart is the ſterne of the ſoule, and a good conſcience is the pilot to gouerne it, which will leade him thorow the whole courſe of his life, till hee come to the hauen of ſafetie and bleſſednes. So is the vprightneſſe of *Iob* commended, that it directed him to the feare of God, and cauſed him to eſchew euill. So is the ſoundnes of *Zacharie* and *Elizabeth* notified, that by vertue thereof *they walked in all the commaundements and ordinances of the Lord without reproofe.* And ſo is the ſincerities of all bleſſed perſons extolled and praiſed by the ſame effects in the hundred and ninteenth Pſalme, Pſal.119.2.3. *that they keepe the commandements of God, and worke no iniquitie.*

*Reaſons.* 1 Firſt, it will ſtirre vp men diligentlie to ſeeke for knowledge and vnderſtanding, attending daily as ſuters at wiſedomes gate in all the ordinances of God. When hee ſpeaketh, they will bring an eare to hearken: When he teacheth, they will bring an heart to learne. When neede requireth, they will vſe their lippes to aske counſell: in the word they will digge for wiſedome: by prayer they will call for aſſiſtance: by meditation they will applie all good inſtructions. And ſo ſeeking of God with an whole heart is ſet in the ſcriptures, as an effect of vprightneſſe, and a cauſe of walking in the law of the Lord. Pſalm.119.2.

2 Secondlie, where a good conſcience is preſent, there the word of God is neuer abſent: for that doth alwaies dwell with fidelitie and trueth. The ſame heart that entertaineth the one, doth euermore enioy the other. And that dealeth faithfullie with them that be faithfull: it will not ſuffer them to wander aſide thorow want of guidance, or to fall into miſcheefes for fault of direction. It ſhal leade thee, ſaith one ſcripture, Prou.6.22. *when thou walkeſt; it ſhall watch for thee when thou ſleepeſt, and when thou wakeſt it ſhall talke with thee.* Iſai.30.21. *Thine eares ſhall heare a word behind thee,* ſaith an other ſcripture, ſaying, *this is the way, walke in that, when thou turneſt to the right hand or to the left.*

Thirdlie, the ſpirit of God is alwaies in them that are vpright and true hearted, it moueth them to aske, to heare, to pray, to reade

reade, and to meditate: it maketh the word effectuall to speake to their soules, all flexible to yeeld to the word, it worketh sound iudgement in the mind, holie affections in the heart, alacritie and readinesse in the will, faith in the whole soule, and sincere sanctitie in the conuersation. Hereof the Apostle speaketh to the Romanes: *As manie as are lead by the spirit of God are the sonnes of God.* And it is as true on the other side, as manie as are the sonnes of God, are lead by the spirit of God: for this is euer reciprocall, and conuertible.

Confutation of the erronious opinion whereby manie illude themselues, and their false bostings whereby they would deceiue others. They roue abroad in all the waies of sinfulnes, in euerie by-lane of licentiousnesse, in ignorance, pride, wantonnes, vnthriftines, crueltie, blasphemie, &c. Yee may finde them almost euery where sauing in religious and honest exercises, and those they flie from, as if they were gaoles and dungeons to hold them in: and yet they thinke, and say, and face it out, that their heart is honest, though their life be lewd: all is well within, though all be naught without: they haue as good soules to God as the best, although they serue Satan as much as the worst. If these men haue vprightnesse, vprightnes hath lost her wonted vertue, and ceaseth to be vpright. For that which was vprightnesse in *Salomons* time, and in all former ages was more faithfull, and forcible to preserue them whom it tooke charge of (as it doth all in whom it inhabiteth) from such inordinate and vicious behauiour. To which may be added also another brood of a wandring and vagrant mind, altogether vnsetled in all points of religion. They heare of multiplicitie of opinions, and the differences of mens iudgements one from another: some are Papists, some are Protestants, some are Brownists, so that they know not what to beleeue, nor whom to trust, and therefore iudge it their readiest way to credit none of them all, and not cleaue to any side. But the righteous are not tossed vp and downe with such waues of vncertainetie and doubtfulnes: sincerities leaueth not men to shift for themselues, that for want of due information in the waies of God, they should walk in flat Atheisme: The Lord promiseth better things to his people that faithfully serue him. *What man is hee that feareth* *Vse.*

*vnto the Lord? him will he teach the way that he ſhall chuſe.* Pſalme 25. 12. Are ye left then without direction? then ye are found without righteouſneſſe. Doth not God teach you his way? then yee are meetlie void of his feare.

2 Reproofe of them that commit themſelues to the leading of contrarie guides, which withhold all their paſſengers from ſinceri-ties counſell and direction, and that is to vaine pleaſure, to filthie lucre, to carnall reaſon, to brutiſh luſt, to the example and faſhion of the wicked world, and to the ſinfull motions which the diuell himſelfe moſt craftilie ſuggeſteth. Theſe are they that almoſt in all places are taken vp for leaders, they are neuer without worke, they haue continuall imployment, and therefore it plainly appeareth that there is little vprightneſſe, and that is as little regarded, & as few iuſt perſons there are to be guided by it.

3 Conſolation againſt the diſcouragements wherewith manie faithfull Chriſtians are aſſaulted in reſpect of the manifold perils which they paſſe thorow. When they look abroad into the world, they ſee all kinds of inducements to euill, by perſwaſions, by threatning, by examples, and ſophiſticall defences; their carnall friendes would allure in kindneſſe, their craftie foes would illude them by cunning, the violent tyrants would compel thē by force. When they ſearch into themſelues, they finde corruptions, ignorance, errors, fearefulneſſe, and inconſtancie, which cauſeth them to fall into many feares, and doubts of their perſeuerance. How, ſay they, ſhall we perſiſt and hold out in the dangerous dayes? How if the word of God ſhould be taken from vs? how if deceiuers ſhould be turned in among vs? how then ſhall we find the way to euerlaſting ſaluation? The holie Ghoſt telleth you in this place, if your hearts be righteous, and plaine, and honeſt, your vprightneſſe ſhall leade you, the ſpirit of God will teach you, and his grace will eſtabliſh you. Which S. *Iohn* doth alſo teſtifie, for the confirmation of ſuch as were in the ſame caſe: *Theſe things*, ſaith he, *haue I written vnto you concerning them that deceiue you. But the anointing which you receiued of him dwelleth in you: and yee neede not that any man teach you: but as the ſame anointing teacheth you of all things, and it is true, and is no lying, and as it taught you, it ſhall abide in him.*

But

*But the frowardnesse*] Wicked sinners are greatest workers of their owne woe. *They shall be taken in their owne wickednes*, saith the sixt verse: *they* shall fall in their owne wickednes, saith the fift: *their frowardnes shall destroy them*, saith this. Where by it appeareth that their miserie commeth not from others, as an accidentall occasion, but groweth from themselues as the proper cause: neither is it an ordinarie euill that is recurable, but a desperate ruine that is remediless: neither yet is it the subuersion of their state, or killing of their bodie, which is but temporarie, but the perdition both of bodie and soule which is euerlasting. To this agreeth that which is spoken to the same purpose, in the fift chapter: *His owne iniquitie shall take the wicked himselfe, and hee shall be holden with the cords of his owne sinne. He shall die for fault of instruction, and for going astray through his owne follie.* Deut. 2. Pro. 5. 22. 23.

Here is a description of euery obstinate and contemptuous sinner, their wickednes doth worke destruction by degrees. It first apprehendeth them as an officer: it keepeth them afterwards in stockes, and bolts, as a layler. And lastlie, it putteth them to death, as an executioner.

First, they despise the patience, and long sufferance, the kindnes and goodnes of God which waiteth for their repentance, and therefore *through the hardnes of their hearts heape to themselues wrath against the day of vengeance*, Rom. 2. 4. 5. *Reasons.* 1

Secondly, *they greeue and vexe the spirit of God*, which offereth grace vnto them, and *therefore he turneth to be their enemie*. They with their peruersenes doe resist him, and hee with his power wil cast downe them. And so the Prophet testifieth in the Psalme: *With the pure thou wilt shew thy selfe pure, but with the froward thou setteſt thy selfe to wrestle.* 2 Isai. 63. 10.

Thirdly, they scorne and despise the word and wisedome of God, and as much as in them is, cause others also to reiect it, and therefore it is iust with the Lord *to make them eate the fruit of their owne waies, and to fill them with their owne deuices*, that is, *to bring them to a fearefull destruction*. Prou. 1. 30. 31. 3

Terror of them that practise sinne of purpose to offend them which dislike of their lewde waies. They will breake the Sabbath in despite of them that would haue them better exercised: they will *Vse.*

will sweare, they say, and stare too, to anger such as admonish them of their vnlawfull othes. Sillie creatures and miserable wretches, will they cut their owne throats to grieue others with the sight of their bloud? will they strangle themselues that others might weepe for their cursed end? Their boisterous stubbernesse may bring a short sorow to others that hate their sinnes, and loue their soules, but a perpetuall shame to themselues, which ioyne with their sinnes against their soules.

Verse 4. *Riches auaile not in the day of wrath: but righteousnes deliuereth from death.*

THese wordes seeme to containe an anticipation, or preuenting of an obiection, which might bee moued against the latter point of the former verse. What speake you of destruction to come vpon wicked men? I trust you will not extend it to all; for many of them are substantiall wealthy men, of great state, and ability. Who can destroy them? What shall their power, and riches doe the while? To this it is here answered, that riches auaile not in the day of wrath: their wealth can neither withstand the strokes of God, nor lessen them, nor make them any whit the more able to beare them, when his anger doth execute iudgements, and when his iudgements declare his anger. But righteousnesse is that which deliuereth from death, and all other miseries, that the sting thereof shall neuer make any man miserable. See the more full handling and prosecution of these words, in the second verse of the tenth chapter.

Verse. 5. *The righteousnesse of the vpright shall direct his way, or make his way straight, or euen: but the wicked shall fall in his owne wickednesse.*

HEre he addeth to that which he had begun in the third verse, and sheweth that sincerity & righteousnes do not only lead men to a good way, and tell them what is their dutie, and fit to be performed, but maketh the way passable for them, and them constant and prosperous in it. To the which againe is opposed the

the way of the wicked, euen their owne ſinfull courſe of life, being crooked and cragged, and rough, and rugged, and full of manifolde perils wherein at the laſt they fall and periſh.

Godly men haue not onely a commaundement, but abilitie giuen vnto them to walke in the Law of God. Their faithfulneſſe doth leuell their way, and paue it before them, wherein they find not onely equitie, but eaſe alſo with delight and ſafetie. And ſo much the Prophet doth intimate when he ſaith, *The waies of the Lord are righteous, and the iuſt ſhall walke in them: but the wicked ſhall fall therein.* *Doct.* Hoſ.14.10.

Firſt, the affections ſanctified do al ioyne hands in forwarding a man to a conſtant proceeding in godlines. The loue of God, and the hope of reward doe ouercome, and ſubdue all difficulties, and dangers, and beare downe all the impediments that may ſtoppe him by diſcouragements: and the feare of God, and dread of his diſpleaſure doth ſuppreſſe the force of worldly luſts, and beate downe the conceits that may draw him to preſumption. *Reaſons.*

Secondly, the experience of Gods preſence, fauour and bleſſing is very effectuall to continue their obedience. For hauing taſted how good the Lord is to them that feare him, they cannot liue without his companie, and that is no where to bee inioyed, but in the way of righteouſneſſe. 2

The Lord himſelfe both by grace and prouidence doth helpe them in this worke. He giueth vertue and power to the miniſtry of his word, to prepare a way betweene himſelfe and the hearts of his people, that there may bee an intercourſe for one to come mutually to the other, as S. *Luke* teſtifieth: *Euerie vallie ſhall bee filled, and euery mountaine and hill ſhall bee brought low, and crooked things ſhall be made ſtraight, and the rough waies ſhalbe made ſmooth.* Luk.3.5. 3

He alſo meaſureth out a meete ſtate for them, and maketh ſuch a mixture or compoſition of proſperitie and aduerſitie, of bleſſings and croſſes, of comforts and ſorrowes, as is moſt holeſome for their ſoules, and directeth all the occurrents that befall them to the furtherance of their ſaluation. And hereof *Iſaiah* ſpeaketh, ſaying: *The way of the righteous is euennes, or equities, thou wilt*

*weigh out a iuſt path for the righteous.* He will ballance out euerie thing that concerneth them in gold weights, that there ſhall not be the leaſt defect, or exceſſe that might turne to their hurt.

*Vſe.* Confutation of their pernicious illuſions ẏ thinke it impoſſible to walke in the waies of God, & therfore iudge it nothing dangerous to ſtray out of them at their pleaſure. The preachers, ſay they, doe teach that which none can obſerue, euery bodie doth contrary, and we muſt do like others, or els we ſhould be counted nobodie. They lay too much vpon vs for praying often and hearing of ſermons, and reading the ſcriptures, and keeping the ſabbath: and ſo do they alſo too much reſtraine vs of pleaſures, and profits, of libertie in ſpeeches, and freedome in apparrell. We muſt follow our ſports: for take away delights, and take away life. Wee muſt vſe what meanes wee can for our ſtate, and make the moſt of our owne: wee muſt in companie behaue our ſelues like the companie, according to their talke we muſt talke, and bee merrie according to their mirth: for an oath, we cannot alwayes auoide it, it is but a ſmall matter now and then to ſweare a little. They would haue vs to become ſaints on earth, but it will not bee, our nature cannot like of ſuch preciſenes, &c. And thus they make the eaſie yoke of Chriſt an importable burthen, and condemne his miniſtery of rigour, in requiring obedience, and iuſtifie themſelues in diſobedience. But leaue this ſhifting, and deale in good earneſt, and ſpeake the trueth plainely. Our ſinnes, and rebellions, ſay, haue ſtopped vp our way, and we haue no iuſtice, nor vprightneſſe to open it vnto vs: wee are ſlaues, and bondmen to corruption, and held in thraldome and ſubiection of it. Otherwiſe the ſtrength of the world, and the ſtreame of the times could not carrie you away ſo ſtrongly. For *Noah* being a righteous man could liue righteouſlie in an age giuen ouer wholy to vnrighteouſneſſe. The ſeruices of God would not be ſo tedious vnto you, as that by no meanes you ſhould bee brought to exerciſe them. For to vpright men they are not onely poſſible, but pleaſant, their ſoule longeth for them, they hunger and thirſt after them, no thing is ſo much deſired of them. Voluptuouſnes, impietie, pride, and other luſts would not be ſo ſweete vnto you, or ſo mightie in you, that you ſhould neither be willing to leaue them, nor able to

forſake

forſake them. For where the ſpirit of God is, there is libertie. All good men abhorre theſe ſinnes, they pray againſt them, they ſtriue againſt them, they preuaile againſt them. Grace ouercommeth the fleſh, and maketh them doe that which the word requireth, and ſhun that which the word forbiddeth, and be that which the word preſcribeth. Though they performe not good things perfectly, yet they practiſe them faithfully: though they caſt not off all euill fully, yet with hatred they reſiſt it truely: though they haue ſo many infirmities as make them oft to ſinne, yet they haue ſo much holineſſe, as maketh them alwaies ſaints.

Verſe 6. *The righteouſneſſe of the vpright deliuereth them: but the tranſgreſſours ſhall be taken in their owne wickednes.*

THis verſe, as it may appeare, is annexed to the former for confirmation of the point therein contained, that righteouſneſſe doth direct the way of vpright men, both to holy conuerſation, and happy ſtate. Againſt the which a doubt may riſe frō the ſhew of the contrarie, becauſe that good men are ſometimes plunged in great calamities, and ſometimes in great tranſgreſſions: and therefore their way ſeemeth as indirect, as if they were wicked, and their righteouſneſſe to doe them as little good as if they had none at all. Now this ſcruple he remoueth by ſhewing what benefite it bringeth, that then eſpecially they haue the vſe of it, when they fall into ſuch diſtreſſes. For then the fruite thereof is moſt for their comfort when it ſhall deliuer them out of dangers, out of troubles, out of feares, out of temptations, out of ſinnes, and from deſtruction. Yet not by ſtrength of it owne, but by the power of God: not according to their worthines in way of deſert, but according to his goodnes in way of reward: not extended to all men that doe good workes, but reſtrained to vpright men whoſe workes are good. And for the clearer illuſtration of their bleſſed eſtate he bringeth in for contrarie, the miſerable condition of the wicked, oppoſing tranſgreſſours to vpright perſons: their miſchiefe to the others iuſtice: their perill to the others protection: the one part incloſed in the net of troubles is yet aſſured of ſafe eſcape by meanes of their graces, the other abroad at the

baite of prosperitie shall certainely fall into snares by meanes of their wickednesse.

The doctrine which the former clause might minister, shal be as conueniently spoken of in the eight verse: and that which is to be raised out of the latter, hath beene alreadie handled in the third.

Verse 7. *When a wicked man dieth his expectation perisheth, and the hope of his power shall perish.*

THe meaning is, that euery sinfull mans affection of hoping, and happinesse hoped for, and strongest meanes to attaine to his hope, shall end with his life, and die at his death, and vanish away at the time of his destruction. The substance of the point hath been handled in the eight and twentith verse of the former chapter, and therefore in this place we wil onely note the circumstance of the time.

*Doct.* The confidence of vngodly men is disappointed at their greatest neede.

He neuer had good by any hope, which hath not the fruition of his hope at his death. Then either it setteth a man in possession of his blessednes, or else casteth him off into misery, woe, and perdition for euer. Though a man should neuer obtaine his desire in any earthly thing during his life, yet if he inioy saluation after this life, he hath failed of nothing. Though a man should misse of nothing that his heart could wish for, whiles breath is in his bodie, yet if hee bee damned when the foule goeth out of his bodie, hee hath neuer gained any thing. And this is the scope of *Iob* his speech, when he saith, *What hope hath the hypocrite though he hath heaped vp riches, when God taketh away his soule?* Iob 27.8. Euen now in his deepest aduersitie, hee would not change state with the most plausible wicked, in their highest prosperitie. For hee is sure that the end of his life will finish his sorrow, and begin his felicitie, and therefore is willing to resigne vp his spirit into the hands of God: but their hope doth depart with their breath, and their damnation doth come with their death, and therefore God must wrest away their soules from them.

*Reasons.* First, they shall then stand before the iudgement seate of God him-

himselfe, and that which hee speaketh they must heare, and that which they heare, they must see, and that which they heare and see, they must also suffer: for execution will accompanie the sentence. Heere they would not beleeue his testimonie, that their case was so bad as his word declared: there they shall feele it to bee worse then they could conceiue of. Heere when hee denounced plagues against their sinnes, they proclaimed peace to their soules; there they shall finde the plagues according to their sinnes, and faile of the peace which they promised to themselues. Here he spake vnto them in goodnes, that vpon their repentance they might obtaine euerlasting mercie: there *bee will speake vnto them in anger*, and for want of repentance will punish them eternally with iustice. Psalm.2.5.

2 Secondly, the fearefull iudgement of God vpon their hearts, that they should not see how they were illuded in their expectation, vntill their death: when the case is remediless. If the vanitie of their hope were discouered to them before, they might cast it off sooner, and lay a new foundation of a better; whereas resting still vpon the stabilitie of that, it breaketh, when it cannot be repaired; and they fall, when they can neuer rise againe. If the fiue foolish Virgins had found their want of oile before the bridegrome was comming, they might in time haue prouided themselues, and be readie to enter with him to the wedding, before the dore was shut. If they which presumed so much of Christ his acquaintance (because they had eaten & drunk in his company, and heard him preach amongst them) had knowne before hand what small account hee would haue made of them, they might haue vsed better meanes whiles time serued, to grow into his fauour. Matth.25. Luk.13.26,27.

3 Thirdly the prerogatiue and priuiledge of Gods people would be much infringed, if wicked men should haue hope with them in the life to come, for therein standeth the contrarietie between them. *The wicked*, saith the Scripture, *shall bee cast away for his lewdnes: but the righteous hath hope at his death*, Prou.14.32. For the present it commeth to passe commonly, that bad men are full, and good men are hungrie, the one sort doe laugh, and the other waile and weepe, as our Sauiour testifieth, Luk.6.25. and therefore hereafter their conditions shall bee changed on both

sides: the pleasure of the one shall bee turned into paine, and the sorrowes of the other into endlesse comforts. As it is said by the Apostle concerning the godlie, that if in this life onely they had hope, they were of all most miserable; so it may be spoken touching the godlesse, that if in the life to come also they had hope, they were of all men most happie.

*Vse.* 1. Reproofe of their folly which liue in hope, that the time of their death will beget them hope, and not destroy it. They know that now they are sinfull persons, without all grace, and goodnes; but they trust that then they shall be conuerted, and brought in a moment to repentance. They know that now they stand in state of damnation, and if they should presently come to iudgement, they must needes perish; but they trust at the last gaspe to call vpon God for mercie, and thereby get pardon for all their sinnes, and so their soules shall bee saued. As though death, and the pangs thereof were appointed for the preferment of Gods vngodly enemies. They haue bestowed themselues in the seruice of sinne, and spent their daies in rebellion against the Lord, and doe they looke for reward thereof to bee crowned with glory? Are theeues, and robbers, are cutpurses, and other malefactours therefore bound ouer to the Assises, that they may bee put in commission, and called vp to the bench?

2 Instruction to confirme our hope by putting our soules out of all perill of perishing afore our death or sicknes, or any other danger, least our euidence be to seek when our cause is to be tried. Let euery one of vs vpon apparance of election, by faith, and the fruits of sanctification, be able to say as trulie, though not with as much feeling of assurance as the Apostle did: Rom. 8. 38. *I am perswaded that neither death, nor life, nor Angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other creature, shall separate vs from the loue of God which is in Christ Iesus.* This will make our life truely prosperous, and profitable, and our death blessed and comfortable, and our state in the world to come immortall, and glorious.

3 Consolation to such as feare God that death will deliuer them from the hopes, and the liues of their sinfull enemies. Away must their soules goe, and downe must their carkasses, and where then are

are their purpoſes, and what becomes of their power? Though they were as mightie as Leuiathan, and as miſchieuous as dragons, yet when they bee dead, as die they muſt, what cauſe hath any man to be afraid of them? *Achab* minded great matters againſt *Micaiah*, at his returne in peace from *Ramoth Gilead*; but God minded to preſerue *Micaiah* by defeating *Achab* of a peaceable returne from thence. Let *Hezechiah*, and all his people, ſaith *Zanecherib*, truſt to it, that I will ſpeede them at my next comming to Ieruſalem: but God had appointed that hee ſhould come no more that way, but be drawne by the ſnowte like a fiſh, or led with a bridle like a beaſt to the ſhambles, and ſlaughter at *Nineue*. The Egyptians were reſolued to purſue Iſrael vntill they ouertooke them, and to put them to the ſword when they caught them, and to take the ſpoile of their goods, when they had ſlaine them: but the waters were firſt to purſue themſelues, and death to ouertake them, and the ſea to haue the ſpoile of their bodies, and hell to make a pray of their ſoules. 1. King. 22. Iſai. 36. 12. and 37. 29.

Verſe 8. *The iuſt eſcapeth out of trouble, and the wicked ſhall come in his ſteed.*

GOds fauour and goodnes doth not free his ſeruants from afflictions, but deliuereth them out of afflictions. Whereinto hee caſteth the wicked, though they be not alwaies of the ſame kind with thoſe which the godly ſuffer, but worſe and more durable, and ſuch as are mixed with Gods wrath, and poiſoned with the ſting of their owne euill conſcience.

Though the afflictions of good men ſeeme ſharpe, and grieuous, yet they are not perpetuall. *Doct.*

Before euer God bring his into troubles, hee appointeth how they ſhal be preſerued in them, and paſſe thorough them, and get out of them. He doth as well foreſee their arriuall as their launching forth, and the end of the boyſterous ſtormes which they muſt indure, aſwell as the beginning and entrance thereof. *Many, or great are the troubles of the righteous, but the Lord deliuereth him out of all.* Neither number, nor grieuouſneſſe, nor continuance of croſſes, nor power of perſecutors, nor any other impediment Pſalm. 34. 19.

ment can hinder his hand from helping his distressed seruants.

*Reasons.* First, they will keepe no silence when they bee in tribulation, they will cry vnto God, and bemone their case vnto him, that hee may take their cause into his hands. Neither is it any waywardnesse in them, but wisedome, and their bounden duty so to doe: for he calleth them vnto him, and commaundeth them to make their complaint: *Call vpon me*, saith hee, *in the day of trouble; so will I deliuer thee, and thou shalt glorifie me*, Psal. 50.15.

2 Secondly, all Gods people are petitioners for euery one, and euery one for all; so that no member of Iesus Christ wanteth friends to sollicite his cause, and to deale effectually for him.

3 Thirdly, the Lord himselfe beholdeth their teares, and sorrowes, and suffrings, hee heareth their most secret sighes and groanes, his compassion is towards them, hee is able to helpe them, hee promiseth to deliuer them, and therefore from his owne commiseration and pitie, by his might and power, and in his trueth and fidelitie hee will surely drawe them out of miserie.

4 Lastlie, their life it selfe is not perpetuall, but short and of small continuance, and therefore how can it be that their troubles should be endles, or any way of long durance? It is an euerlasting trueth which the holy spirit publisheth in the Reuelation of Saint Reuel.14.13. *Iohn: Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, for they rest from their labours*, that is, from all kinds of sorrowes and sufferings.

*Vse.* Reproofe of their follie which seeke to preuent troubles, or to shake them off by shunning the duties of righteousnes. As though righteousnes were not a sure friend to deliuer men, but a treacherous aduersarie to betray them. As though it were a matter of great perill to please God, and the onely way for safetie to prouoke him. As though the best meanes of defence were to disarme ones selfe, and to be weaponed and armed were to expose himselfe to the shot and strokes of his enemie. And yet this cowardlie heart, and erroneous mind is in very many, that they dare not addict themselues strictly to euery seruice of pietie and iustice, lest they should cast themselues into snares, and troubles, and 1.Pet.3.13,14 molestations. They are not perswaded by S. *Peters* testimonie, that no man can hurt them, if they follow that which is good, neither

ther be they affected with his consolation, that blessed are they, if they suffer for righteousnesse sake.

Comfort to them that are tossed with the waues of troubles, and aduersities by persecutions, temptations, and necessities, if searching their hearts they can finde their vprightnes, and trying their waies they proue to be righteous; there is no cause why they should call in question the state of their soules, or thinke their present case to be irrecouerable. If multitude or greatnes of troubles were to make Gods fauour doubtfull, then few iust men should haue it certaine: for he hath allotted them to all his children, and made as due prouision for them of correction, as of foode: and he that is alwaies, and altogether without it, is not a sonne, but a bastard. If it were not an vsuall thing for good men to bee in afflictions, the scriptures would not so vsually speake of their comming out of afflictions. Let no man therefore say in prosperitie, I shall neuer be moued: so let no godlie man say in aduersitie, I shall neuer be restored. The Lord taketh as little pleasure to bee euermore afflicting his people, as a most tender-hearted parent doth to be alwaies beating his children. And as an indulgent father cannot indure to see violence offred to the shedding of his sonnes bloud in his presence: so neither will our God permit the wicked to spoile and oppresse the godly continually in his sight. 2

Heb. 12.8.

Psalm. 30.6.

When the mercie of God beginneth to raise the godly out of afflictions, his iustice is readie to cast the wicked into miserie. The sinners are put into one scale of the weights, and the saints into the other. When the one riseth vp, the other sinketh downe: when the one commeth from troubles to prosperitie, the other goeth from prosperitie to troubles. This the Lord telleth wicked men before hand, and will not faile to fulfill it in due season. *Behold*, saith he, *my seruants shall eate, and ye shall be hungrie: behold, my seruants shall drinke, and yee shall be thirstie: behold, my seruants shall reioyce, and yee shall be ashamed: behold my seruants shall sing for ioy of heart, and yee shall crie for sorrow of heart, and shall howle for vexation of minde.* It seemeth to them an incredible paradoxe, and a newes by farre more admirable, then acceptable, that there should be such a transmutation of conditions on both sides, to *Doct.* 2.

Isa. 65.13.14.

contraries; but he doth know that it will be ſo, and can effect that it ſhall be ſo, and hath decreed that it muſt be ſo, and therefore relateth the particulars with ſuch certainty, as if forthwith the execution thereof ſhould be preſented to their ſenſes.

*Reaſons.* First, it is Gods ordinance, and the order which he vſeth in his proceedings, that iudgement ſhall begin at his owne houſe, as
1.Pet.4.17. S. *Peter* teacheth, and from thence be deriued to the wicked to continue vpon them for euer. The medicinable potion, at the brimme of the cup, he will haue his owne children to drinke for their health and preſeruation, but the dregges and poiſon at the bottome, his enemies muſt ſwallow vp for their ruine and deſtruction.

2 Secondly, troubles, feares, vexations, and torments are the proper portion of ſinners, they receiue not their childs part, nor enter vpon their inheritance, till they fall into them. Good men paſſe through them, as a deepe mirie lane in a ſtrange countrie, but trauell home to their owne pleaſant ſoile of comfort; but the euill and rebellious gallop ſwiftly in the faire way of proſperitie, and haſten to their owne vncomfortable home of hidious deſolation and horror.

3 Thirdly, their malitions behauiour againſt Chriſtians doth with a ſtrong hand draw themſelues into miſerie, and lift the others out of it. The Egyptians made it their exerciſe to drowne the children of the Iſraelites, and God deliuering the Iſraelites made the Egyptians to be drowned. *Haman* caſt about with all his wits, how he might bring *Mordecai* to the gallows, and the Lord appointed in his wiſedome that the gallows ſhould catch vp *Haman*. And ſo ſtood the caſe with *Daniels* enemies, they were driuen with their owne fleſh and familie to feede the lions which they had appointed to eate vp *Daniel*. The Edomites were glad to ſee the Iewes drinke ſo bitter a draught of calamity, as the Babylonians by Gods righteous iudgement had mingled for them; and therefore the Lord would make the Edomites to pledge them in the ſame cup, and was more fauourable to the Iewes for their reioycing at them. For ſo hee ſpeaketh to them both in the Lamentations: *Reioyce, and be glad O daughter Edome that dwelleſt in the land of Vz, the cup alſo ſhall paſſe through vnto thee:*

*thee: thou ſhalt be drunken and vomit. Thy puniſhment is accompliſhed, O daughter Zion: hee will no more carrie thee into captiuitie.* Lam.4.21.

The doing of miſchiefe to good men, the attempting of it, though they faile of their purpoſes, their wiſhing of it, though they dare not attempt it, and their reioycing at it when it is effected by others, all this doth aſſuredly bring miſchiefe on ſinfull mens owne heads.

Admonition to the aduerſaries of the Church, and Chriſtians, that they deale more mildlie and moderatelie with them. The caſe is their owne, they prepare for themſelues whatſoeuer they impoſe vpon others. The burdens which they lay vpon their neighbours ſhoulders muſt be tranſferred to their owne backes: the bread of affliction which they prouide for their brethren, in time will turne to their owne foode: the little-eaſe and dungeon wherein they ſhut vp the innocent, muſt in time be made their owne habitation. *Vſe.*

Terror to vngodly perſons in regard of their dangerous condition. Onely troubles they flie from, fearing them more then anie manner of ſinne, and therfore account the life of afflicted Chriſtians to be moſt miſerable: and trouble is that which flieth as faſt after them to make a pray of them, which alſo will make their ſtate ten thouſand times worſe than any Chriſtians can be. And if it ſo come to paſſe in this life, as many times it doth, that the godly are lifted vp to proſperitie, and the vngodly into grieuous aduerſitie, what a change will there be, and contrarietie of their eſtates in the life to come. Which appeareth in the parable of the rich man, and *Lazarus*. Here the rich man receiued his pleaſure and *Lazarus* paine: but there is *Lazarus* in heauen, and the rich man in hell: *Lazarus* is in *Abrahams* boſome, and the rich man in the flames of fire: *Lazarus* is comforted, and the rich man tormented. The beſt man in his beſt ſtate here on earth, hath not a full inlargement, but onely inioyeth libertie of the priſon: and the worſt man in his worſt ſtate is not yet come to execution, but onely ſitteth in the ſtockes. But the moſt perfect and abſolute difference and change will be at the day of the Lord Ieſus, when ſoule and bodie of the ſaints ſhall bee filled with glory and im- 2 Luk.16.

mortalitie, and ſoule and bodie of ſinfull creatures ſhall be ouerwhelmed with ſhame, and perpetuall contempt. And herewith the Apoſtle comforteth the poore perſecuted Theſſalonians; *It is a righteous thing with God,* ſaith he, *to recompence tribulation to them that trouble you, and to you which are troubled reſt with vs, when the Lord Ieſus Chriſt ſhall ſhew himſelfe from heauen with his mightie Angels. &c.* 2. Theſſ. 1. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10.

3 Conſolation to poore helpeleſſe perſons, if they bee alſo harmeles, that can find no friends which wil or can procure them deliuerance out of troubles. Few good are to bee found that take to heart the ſufferings of poore innocents, and few of thoſe that take them to heart, are able to preuaile any thing for them. But are there no wicked which may be heard of? Haue they no enemies which doe moleſt them? Alas, there be too many of theſe euery where, the world ſwarmeth with them. Then be of good comfort, you muſt come forth that they may come in, the place muſt be yeelded vp to the right owners. Cannot ye get a releaſe freely? will not intreatie worke your libertie? A price then ſhall be giuen, a ranſome ſhall be payd for it, and you ſhall be diſcharged. For ſuch a promiſe we haue from God in this booke: *the wicked ſhall bee a ranſome for the iuſt, and the tranſgreſſour for the righteous.*

Prou. 21. 18.

Verſe 9. *A hypocrite with his mouth corrupteth his neighbour: but the righteous ſhall be deliuered by knowledge.*

DIſſemblers, and ſuch as make a ſhew of godlines, but denie the power thereof, are commonly moſt hurtfull ſeducers, corrupting mens hearts with hurtfull ſpeeches, either deprauing that which is good, or iuſtifying that which is euill, and ſo they infect their mindes with erronious opinions, and ſtirre vp their hearts to ſinfull luſts, and peruert their waies with vngodly behauiour. But now to preuent the feares of the good, that they alſo are like to be drawne into miſchiefe, becauſe there are ſo many hypocrites, and to take away the cloakes and ſhifts from the wicked, which lay all the blame of their ſinnes on others which miſlead them, he ſheweth the meanes whereby this hurt may bee

auoyded,

auoyded, and that is, by getting knowledge, and being righteous.

Vngodly men are neuer more miſchieuous then when they put on the vizzard of godlines. Though this may be proued by manifold teſtimonies, as well out of the old teſtament as the new, yet we will rather exemplifie it by the experience of the times, then by allegations of ſcriptures. Through all the bookes before Chriſt, the falſe prophets are almoſt euery where complained of. In the time of our Sauiour, the Prieſts, Scribes, and Phariſies of all others were his bittereſt enemies. The Apoſtles found none ſo dangerous as falſe Apoſtles and ſuch as tooke vpon them to bee profeſſours and preachers. *Paul*, *Peter*, *Iude* and *Iohn* are moſt ample in giuing admonitions to beware of them. Euer ſince that time there haue been ſprings, ſtreames, flouds, and ſeas of ſuperſtition, idolatrie, violence, and all abomination in the kingdome of Antichriſt: and all vnder pretence of the Churches authority, zeale, deuotion, and good intendment. *Doct.* 1.

Firſt, ſuch are very forward and buſie in this ſeruice of Sathan, (for diligent they are not to be eſteemed, vnleſſe they were better exerciſed) and therefore the more hurt and miſchiefe they doe. That *Ieremy* obſerued in the wicked deceiuers of his age, *that they taught their tongues to ſpeake lies, and tooke great paines to doe wickedly*. And that our Sauiour repooued in the curſed Scribes and Phariſies of his age, *that they compaſſed ſea and land to make one of their profeſſion: and when hee was made, they made him twofold more the child of hell then themſelues.* *Reaſons.* Ierem.9.5. Matth.23.15.

Secondly, they are very deceitfull, and cunning: and therefore the ſcriptures compare them to craftie gameſters, and fowlers, which catch more birds artificially by lime-twigs, grinnes, and nettes, then they kill violently by throwing ſtones at them. Of theſe guileſull perſons the Apoſtle ſpeaketh, ſaying: *ſuch falſe Apoſtles are deceitfull workers, and tranſforme themſelues into the Apoſtles of Chriſt. And no marueile: for Satan is tranſformed into an Angell of light. Therefore it is no great thing, though his miniſters tranſforme themſelues, as though they were the miniſters of righteouſneſſe.* 2 2.Cor.11.13.

They are the more venemous, by how much they are leſſe

miſtruſted for the opinion that is had of them for pietie and goodneſſe doth prepare a paſſage for their poiſon to enter into the bowels of mens ſoules. When they are are reputed for godly, religious, wiſe, and iudicious, all is receiued which they ſet abroach, all is diſliked which they ſet againſt. It is an eaſie matter for a man to loſe his purſe, when hee followeth the robber as guide of his way. It is an eaſie matter for a man to loſe his life, when he maketh a poyſoner, and his enemie to be his Phyſition.

*Vſe.* 1. Inſtruction to be very wary that their peſtilent breath infect not our hearts to keepe our eares from hearkening to our perſwaſions, as much as we would refraine from one that had the plague ſore vpon him. When Woolues will put on Sheepe skins, when thornes will take vpon them to be vines, when thiſtles will be figge trees, and euill workers haue the place of Prophets, then our Sauiour admoniſheth vs to looke to our ſelues, and take heede of them.

2 Secondly, conſolation if wee corrupt not others with our tongues; but rather vſe them to heale the corrupted, this declareth that we are neither openly wicked in behauiour, nor ſecretly hypocriticall in heart: for a holeſome tongue is euermore a certaine note of an vpright conſcience.

*Doct.* 2. *But the righteous, &c.*] Though the tongue of the wicked be a deadly weapon to doe hurt: yet the knowledge of the godly is a defenſiue armour to preſerue him from it. The medicine which Saint *Peter* doth preſcribe, with his cauear to auoide the deluſions of ſubtill ſeducers, doth after a ſort make a promiſe of remedie againſt them, to ſuch as ſhall carefully receiue it. *Beware* (ſaith he) *leaſt ye be plucked away with the error of the wicked, and fall from your owne ſtedfaſtnes. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Sauiour Ieſus Chriſt*, 2.Pet.3.17.18.

*Reaſons.* 1. Firſt, Ignorance is that which giueth entertainement to errors, and all ſound knowledge excludeth them out of dores. Whom doth the fooliſh woman, or folly her ſelfe call to her feaſt, but Prou.9.16. *ſuch as are ſimple?* Whom doth ſhe vtter her minde vnto, but to *ſuch as are deſtitute of vnderſtanding?* And whom doe the lurking corner-creepers ſo much pray vpon as *ſimple women laden with ſinnes, and lead with diuers luſts?*

Secondly,

Secondly, men of knowledge haue their wits exerciſed to diſ- 2
ſcerne betweene good and euill, betweene light and darkenes, betweene the ſeruants of God, and the workers of iniquitie. They beare the image of God, and therefore know the image of God where it is, and ſee the defects of it where it is not. They carrie a light within them whereby they are able to diſcouer the doctrines of falſehoode, which are contrarie to the trueth, and the workes of darkenes which are contrarie to holines, and therefore can reiect them both.

Thirdly, the ſound knowledge of Chriſtians is not onely a 3
ſhield to warde off all deteſtable errors, and damnable hereſies that they ſeduce not the mind, but alſo a preſeruatiue to expell all flattering inticements, and ſinfull ſuggeſtions that they corrupt not the heart. And that the holy Ghoſt doth expreſſely promiſe in this booke to euery one that doth loue, and labour for knowledge. *When wiſedome entreth into thine heart, and knowledge delighteth thy ſoule, then ſhall counſell preſerue thee, and vnderſtanding ſhall keepe thee, and deliuer thee from the euill way, and from the man that ſpeaketh froward things, and from them that leaue the waies of righthouſneſſe, to walke in the waies of darkeneſſe: which reioyce in doing euill, and delight in the frowardneſſe of the wicked,* Prou.2. 10,11,12,13,14.

Encouragement to vſe diligence by all good meanes, in all *Vſe.* 1.
Gods ordinances appoynted to that end to get vnderſtanding and righteouſneſſe, ſince our neede thereof is ſo great, and the vſe ſo good. Neither wealth, nor wit, nor any other thing can ſtand vs in ſo good ſteede for the preſeruation of our hearts as theſe doe. For they all without thoſe are treacherous and deceitfull, ready alwaies to betray vs, and open the dores to let in flatterie and corruption: but theſe haue faithfulneſſe and courage, and power, and conſtancie, to ſtand for the defence of our ſoule to the end.

Though there ſhould come neuer ſo many bands, and armies of Satanicall and helliſh hypocrites, and euery mans mouth were a a musket or cannon to ſend out moſt mortal, and deadly poyſon, yet if we be armed with theſe graces, we neede not to feare them. The Antichriſtian deceiuer cannot illude them that haue receiued 2.Theſ.2.10.

Matth.24.24. ued the knowledge and loue of the truth. The falſe Chriſts ſhall not deceiue the elect, as being protected by Gods power, and
Ephes.6. furniſhed with holy vnderſtanding. The diuell himſelfe with all his fierie darts and temptations, ſhall be reſiſted and driuen backe by thoſe that haue on the breaſt-plate of righteouſneſſe, and the other pieces of Gods complete armour. The Lord Ieſus by the ſound knowledge of the ſacred Scriptures hath alreadie repulſed and turned him to flight, and putteth the ſame weapon into our hands, with ſtrength and power to purſue him.

3 Conuiction of them that are drawne away by euery iugler, and ſinfull companion. The Ieſuites, and Seminaries, the heretickes, and traytors, may diſgorge their ſtomackes, and vomit vp their venome into their boſomes, and they haue neither hand, nor heart, nor tongue, to reiect them, but ſuffer themſelues to bee carried to errours, to hereſies, to idolatrie, to conſpiracies, to treaſons, to rebellions, to ſhamefull executions, to fearefull damnation. Therefore they were not righteous, therefore they wanted knowledge, therefore they were naked and deſtitute of all defenſiue armour. And here come alſo to bee taxed, as friends to corruption, all they that are enuious to vnderſtanding, and the meanes thereof, which thinke it ſo much the more dangerous to ſeeke for, by how much there are more which goe about to deceiue. But this hath been ſufficiently ſpoken of in the ſixteenth verſe of the ninth chapter, eſpecially in the vſe.

Verſe 10. *In the proſperitie of the righteous the citie reioyceth, and when the wicked periſh there is ioy.*

IN *the proſperitie of the righteous*] that is, when things goe well with thē, *the citie reioyceth*, that is, the honeſt and well diſpoſed citizens, and countrie men be inwardly glad, and outwardly declare their ioy, by cheerfull countenance, and ſpeeches, and other meanes, as opportunitie ſerueth to expreſſe the ſame. And ſo doe they alſo at the death, and ouerthrow of oppreſſours, and tyrants, and other wicked perſons, by whoſe fall the people riſe, and whoſe ruine is the repaire of the citie.

*Doct.* 1. Good men haue not onely Gods hand to giue them good things,

things, but godlie mens hearts to bee ioyfull for them. When *Mordecai* was aduanced the citie of *Shushan* reioyced, and was glad. And when the Lord shewed his great mercie on *Zacharie*, and *Elizabeth* in giuing them a sonne, their kinsfolke and neighbours came and reioyced with them. Hest.8.15. Luk.1.58.

First, the prouidence of God hath the disposing of all mens affections: he deriueth their loue, and their hatred, their liking, and loathing to euery one, as seemeth best to his owne wisedome. And he hath appointed by decree in his counsell: by precept in his word; and by working of his spirit that godly men shall bee well affected towards the godly, and Christians shall bee tender hearted one towards another. *Reasons.*

Secondly, they are all members of one bodie, and therefore a sympathy, and fellow feeling of one anothers state is mutually among them; *If one suffer, all suffer with it: if one member be had in honour, all the members reioyce with it.* 1.Cor.12.26. 2

Thirdlie, it is well knowne that righteous men will make their brethren commoners with them in their prosperitie. When they are aduanced, others shall not bee disgraced thereby but honoured: when they are inriched, others shall not bee impouerished thereby, but relieued: when they are made mightie, others shall not be weakned thereby, but supported. And so it is said concerning *Mordecai*, that when the royall apparell was on his backe, and the crowne of gold on his head, that vnto the Iewes was come light, and ioy, and gladnes, and honour. Hest.8.16. 3

Now all this is contrary in the state of harmefull persons, when God declareth his anger by casting them downe, the people publish their ioy by clapping their hands at them. At the least Gods seruants for Gods glorie, their owne peace, and the publike safetie, take comfort in this mercie that is shewed to the Church, in taking away such enemies. God inclineth their hearts to do this, and the crueltie of the enemie hath procured it, as the effects of both did manifest at the drowning of *Pharaoh*, and destruction of *Sisera*.

Instruction to them that bee desirous to possesse the hearts of honest men, that they gaine them by iustice, and vpright behauiour, by mercie, kindnes, and goodnes. This course will draw *Vse.* 1.

their desires to wish well vnto them: this will put arguments into their mouthes to speake well for them: this will giue them incouragement to further their aduancement: this will make their promotion acceptable to them, and then desirous of the continuance and increase of the same. Now many men desire to be popular, but few to be righteous: it is easie to affect the greatnesse of *Mordecai, who was second to the King, and great among his people, and accepted among the multitude of his brethren:* but it is hard to follow his goodnes *in procuring their wealth, and seeking their peace*, and prosperitie. Good liking is not gotten by pompe and power, and fauour is not gained with wealth and riches, and loue is not commaunded by authoritie, and dignitie: these may be allured with goodnes, but neuer compelled by violence.

Hest.10.3.

2 Reproofe of enuious persons, that maligne the good estate of godlie Christians: they reioyce not at their prosperitie like worthy Citizens, but grieue, and vexe at it, like barbarous aliants: Either they labour to keepe them vnder that they shall not rise, or to vndermine them that they shall not stand, as appeareth in the example of *Daniels* aduersaries. But all is in vaine: they shall be frustrate of their purpose, they shall be foiled in their practise, they shall be shamed, and cursed, and plagued for their malitious hearts, and mischieuous enterprises. *They that hate Zion, shall all be ashamed and turned backeward. They shall be as the grasse on the house tops, which withereth afore it commeth forth.* Psal.129.5.6.

Dan.6.

*Doct.* 2. *The citie reioyceth, &c.*] Godly men are the chiefe inhabitants whersoeuer they dwell.

They that reioyce at the prosperitie of the righteous, are called the citie, the place hath denomination from them: and it is certaine that neither all, nor the most, nor in many places the greatest are so wel affected, but contrary minded. So it is said in the booke of *Hester* that when the decree was gone forth, whereby all the Iewes were proscripted and destinated to death, that the citie of Shushan was in perplexitie. Who was this citie there, but the poore condemned Israelites, who from their first comming thither were but strangers and captiues? *Ahashuerus*, and *Haman* were not of the number: for they were merily drinking of wine; and a great number both in the Court, and Citie, as it may appeare,

appeare, were glad of their miſerie. So ſaith the Apoſtle to the Romanes, Your faith is publiſhed throughout the whole world, meaning thereby in all the Churches. Rom.1.8.

Firſt, they haue a good eſtate in their goods, and hold their liuings by a right tenure, through Ieſus being inheritors of the earth: whereas none elſe are ſo much as tenants at will by any right or warrant from God, but meere vſurpers intruding themſelues without any allowance into his poſſeſſions. *Reaſons.* 1.

Secondly, all others are aliants in Gods account, and only their vnderlings and ſeruants. For ſo he ſpeaketh of ſuch as hold themſelues to bee maiſters and commaunders of many others: *The ſtrangers ſhall ſtand and feede your ſheepe, and the ſonnes of ſtrangers ſhall be your plow-men, and dreſſers of your vines*: Iſai.61.5. 2

Conſolation to them that haue the teſtimonie of the faithfull, and approbation of godly Chriſtians in their behauiour. It is as good as if all the towne and countrie did commend them. And that was S. *Iohns* meaning when hee ſaid that *Demetrius had a good report of all men*. All wicked men would neuer ſpeake well of him, or if they ſhould, it had been little for his credit: but foraſmuch as the Apoſtle teſtifieth of him, and the trueth it ſelfe alſo, it muſt needes be that thoſe *all men* were all good men which knew his goodnes. *Vſe.* 3.Ioh.verſ.12.

Terror for them that haue the complaint of Gods ſeruants againſt them. Though they be magnified of the multitude, and applauded of neuer ſo many wicked, they ſhall neither haue true honour, nor ſound comfort thereby. The voices of Chriſtians will carrie the cauſe, and their verdict is that which will caſt the faultie, if they conuict, the Lord will condemne: for they neuer agree all to finde any guiltie, but where the word of God, and his ſpirit haue firſt giuen in euidence againſt them. It went hard with *Zanecherib* when God told him that *Zion* deſpiſed him, and laughed him to ſcorne, and ſhooke her head at him. But what cared he for that? Did not he deſpiſe her as much? True it is, that he deſpiſed her as much, but not with ſo much danger to her. His was a vaine, fooliſh, abſurd, and contemptible contempt, like paper ſhot againſt a ſtrong bulwarke: but hers was mightie, and effectuall carrying force with it, like a Cannon againſt a weake 2 Iſa.37.22.

cottage which will ſhake it to peeces in a moment.

Verſe 11. *By the bleſſing of the righteous the citie is exalted: but it is ſubuerted by the mouth of the wicked.*

THe meaning is, that iuſt men are very beneficial to the ſocieties of men by their religious, prudent, and profitable ſpeeches: for ſo the word *bleſſing* ſignifieth in many places: and ſo it is here meant as the antitheſis ſheweth; and ſo a poore man in aduerſitie, may as well be an inſtrument of good to his countrie, as a rich man in proſperitie, as *Salomon* teſtifieth, Eccle. 9. 15. On the other ſide, the wicked with his mouth and hurtfull words, doth worke miſchiefe among whom he conuerſeth.

*Doct.* *By the bleſſing, &c.* A godly man will alwaies do good to the place where he dwelleth, that many ſhall fare the better for him.

The land of Iudah found the trueth of this by comfortable experience in the daies of their good Kings, and Prophets, as *Iehoſaphat, Hezechias, Iſaiah* and others, who obtained wonderfull deliuerances for their people at the hand of the Lord. The land of Iſrael found the truth of it in the daies of their holie Prophets *Eliah*, and *Eliſha* who procured helpe againſt drowth, famine, and enemies, and therefore were called the chariots, and horſemen of Iſrael. What ſhould I ſpeake of *Ioſeph*, of *Moſes*, and *Samuel*, and *Dauid*, of *Nehemiah*, and *Ezra*, of *Heſter*, and *Mordecai*, and many others, among whom S. *Paul* muſt be of the *Quorum*, as one of eminent note, ſpecially for that marueilous preſeruation of all that ſailed in the ſhippe with him, notwithſtanding they were very infidels.

*Reaſons.* Firſt, hee will preferre the welfare of the publike ſtate, before his owne priuate aduantage and profite. When *Moſes* might haue continued a fauourite, hee voluntarily for his commoditie ſake incurred the Kings diſpleaſure: when he might haue been great in Ægypt, hee rather forſooke Ægypt: when hee might haue liued in credit, pleaſure, and plentie like a prince, hee choſe to liue obſcurely, painefully, and hardly as a ſhepheard. When *Heſter* was bid to aske, and haue to the halfe of an ample and large empire, ſhe ſet aſide all reſpect of lands and liuings, and onely craued the liues of her people.

Secondly,

Secondly, he will apply his tongue to all those meanes whereby hee may best effect his desire, and profit his neighbours: by prayers, by counsels, by exhortations, and incouragements, and specially by striuing against the sinnes that are among them. 2

Gods blessing vpon him, doth make his blessing prosperous to others. For wicked men many times doe speede the better for the fauour of the Lord which doth accompanie his seruants. *Laban* knew, and acknowledged, that therein hee was much beholden to *Iacob*, not onely for his faithfulnes and paines, but for the good effect and successe of them. *Iosephs* master, and *Iosephs* keeper, and *Pharaohs* house, and all the land of Ægypt sped the better for the goodnes of God towards *Ioseph*. On the other side, in the sinfull person, euery thing is otherwise. His tongue and talke is hurtfull and noysome. Hee is wholy carried with selfe loue, and priuate lucre. All his endeuours be to accomplish his owne wicked purposes, and his meanes thereunto be vnlawfull and hurtfull. As hee by rebellion hath prouoked the wrath of God against himselfe, so is the curse sent out after him, and bringeth a iudgement many times vpon the place where he is, and the people that are about him, and the countrie wherein hee liueth. 3

Instruction to vse all kindnes to godly men, since we enioy so great a blessing by them. If they helpe to exalt the citie, let them be also exalted in the citie, or be well spoken of, or haue good affection borne vnto them: at the least beware that they be not iniuriously oppressed. The vnreasonable creatures which are commodious to the owners, will euery wiseman bee willing to haue, and carefull to keepe well. The insensible trees which bring forth plentie of good fruite, are husbandly dressed, and heedefullie preserued, that nothing doe barke the bodie, nor browse vpon the branches, nor breake downe the boughes. And shall not faithfull men be regarded, which doe more good in better manner, to greater numbers, for longer continuance? God forbid that we should be so vnthankefull, as to requite euill for good: or so improuident, as to hinder our good by requiting of euill? or so foolish and franticke as to ouerturne our former good, and change it wholy into euill and mischiefe. For that is the euent *Vse.* 1.

that commonly enſueth vpon ſuch as deale vnkindly with thoſe who deale kindly with them. This cauſed *Ieremie* to turne his petitions, and accuſations, and his interceſſions into imprecati-
Ierem.18.20. ons. *Shall euill be recompenced for good? for they haue digged a pit for my ſoule: Remember that I ſtood before thee to ſpeake good for them, and to turne away thy wrath from them. Therefore deliuer vp their children to famine, and let them drop away by the force of the ſword, &c.*

2 Reprehenſion of ſuch as are ſpoilers of their cities, and not exalters; which ruinate townes, and cities, and countries, but erect nothing but their owne houſes (habitations they are not properlie to be called, becauſe they ſeldome dwell in them) and thoſe they make ſumptuous for pride and oſtentation. Of ſuch the
Iſa.59.7. Prophet ſpeaketh when he ſaith, that *deſolation and deſtruction are in their pathes:* they make haucocke of all that commeth within their walke, and lay all waſte before them. And here the Ieſuits, and Seminaries, and the whole crue of theſe vnnatural, barbarous, and cruell Papiſts are to be condemned, which doe as greedily thirſt after the bloud of their King, and countrimen, and the ſubuerſion of the kingdome and countrie, as any forraine enemies in their greateſt hoſtilitie are poſſibly able.

Verſe 12. *Hee that is deſtitute of wiſedome deſpiſeth his neighbour: but a man of vnderſtanding will keepe ſilence.*

A Fooliſh man which hath a beggerly heart, as the words ſignifie, being voide of ſound iudgement, and ſanctified knowledge of Gods holy will, deſireth to vilifie others, eſpecially ſuch as feare God, and to make them appeare baſe and contemptible. And this is done ſometimes in bitter anger, by rayling, reuiling, and contumelious reproches; and ſometimes in ſcurrill mirth, by girding ieſts, and laughter; and ſometimes in hidden craft, by falſe reports and ſlaunders. But they which haue more wiſedome, will frame themſelues to better behauiour: they will not onelie keepe ſilence from offering that indignitie to them that prouoke them not thereunto, but will alſo forbeare to requite them with reproaches, which haue not ſpared to ſeeke their diſgrace. For ſo doth

doth *Dauid* teſtifie of himſelf in this caſe: *I am as a man that heareth not, and as a dumbe man that openeth not his mouth.* Pſal. 38 13.

They which are the moſt contemptible perſons, are the greateſt contemners of others. As wiſedome aboue all other things doth make a man to be excellent, ſo needes muſt the want of it make him to be baſe: and yet ſuch as come not only too ſhort of the perfection, but not at all to the beginning thereof, are readie to ſport at them which are moſt graced with it. *When the wicked commeth,* ſaith *Salomon, then commeth contempt, and with the vile man, reproach.* Prou. 18.3. None ſcoffed ſo much at *Dauid* as the abiects, and Pſal. 35.15. the drunkards made ſongs of him. None mocked *Iob* ſo much as the vagabonds who were no better then their fathers, and their fathers not ſo good as dogges. *They were the children of fooles, and the children of villaines, which were more vile then the earth. And yet he was their ſong, and their talke, they ſpared not to ſpit in his face.* Iob 30.1.8.9.10.

Firſt, where wiſedome is wanting, there pride aboundeth (as an emptie ſtomack is full of winde) and pride bringeth diſdainefulneſſe, becauſe they conceiue of wonders in themſelues, and diſcerne of nothing but wants in others. The blinde bragging Phariſie was not aſhamed to come into Gods owne preſence, to deprаue the humble poore Publicane, who was incomparably the Luk. 18.9.11. better man. *Reaſons.*

Secondly, they are deſpiſers of God himſelfe, reiecting his counſell, and caſting his word behind their backes, and therefore it is no ſtrange thing that they ſhould offer deſpite to mortall men. 2

Thirdly, contempt is in all equitie, their owne due portion, and God hath appointed in his iudgements, that they ſhall recouer their right to themſelues, by making an offer. 3

Confutation of them which take it to be the fruit of their wiſdome, and ripenes of their wit, to haue a dexteritie in breaking of ieſts vpon men to make thē to be laughed at. So farre they think they ſhew the rarenes of their vnderſtanding, as they can make men to feele the keenenes of their tongues. But God which beſt knoweth who be wiſe, and what is wiſedome, doth charge them to be vnwiſe, and void of wiſedome. He to whom it belongeth *Vſe.*1.

to

to conuince fooles, and to punish them, doth marshall these among the great fooles that shall be punished.

2 Instruction as to keepe our selues from the societie of such companions, vnlesse we be duely called into place; so not to bee dismaied, though in our callings, and for weldoing, they shoote their bolts at vs. Their strongest arrowes are but strawes, and their strongest archers are but dwarfs and Pigmees. The Lord himselfe doth animate vs against the greatest of them by the Prophet: *Feare yee not*, saith he, *the reproach of men, neither be yee afraide of their rebukes. For the moath shall eate them vp like a garment, and the worme shall eate them like woll.* If a worme, and a maggot will proue stronger then they, and get the victorie of them, why should their words be more regarded then wormes, and maggots? Ideots, and naturals we care not for though they should raile vpon vs, and giue reuiling speeches: poore creatures they are to be pitied, they want wit, they know not what they say: and why then should these bee so much respected, which are to bee lamented for want of wisedome, and say they know not what?

Isai. 51. 7. 8.

Verse 13. *He that goeth about as a talebearer, discouereth a secret: but he that is of a faithfull heart, concealeth a matter.*

IN this place, and in the nineteenth of Leuiticus verse 16. and elsewhere the holy Ghost compareth busi-bodies, and such as delight to deale in other mens matters, to petie chapmen, and pedlers, which carry wares about, selling in one place, and buying in another; and two markes of lewdnes he brandeth them with, as first, that they haue false and vnfaithfull hearts: and then that they haue loose and blabbing tongues that can keepe no counsell, but tell all that they heare. They will draw on men by their newes and reports to open their minds and secrets vnto them, which after they will publish to others. From both which vices hee cleareth all good men, their hearts are faithfull, and their tongues are silent to couer such matters as loue requireth them to hide, and dutie and conscience do not bind them to lay open.

*Doct.* A slaunderous tongue will be as readie to defame them whom it

ſpeaketh vnto, as whom it ſpeaketh againſt. It trafficketh altogether by exchaunge, it will deliuer nothing to you, but vpon condicion to receiue ſomewhat from you. It will neuer beare an emptie packe, but deſireth where ought is vttered, and taken out, there to take ſomewhat to be put in, ỳ it may haue choiſe for other places. This is the cauſe why the Lord forbiddeth to chaffer, or to haue any dealing at all with ſuch manner of perſons, though they make ſhew of neuer ſo great loue and kindnes towards vs. *Hee that goeth about as a ſlaunderer, diſcouereth ſecrets: therefore meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips*, Prou.20.19.

Firſt, the ſame cauſe that moued him to relate others mens af- *Reaſons.*
faires to thee, will likewiſe induce him to diſcouer thine to other men: and that is want of loue, a deſire to be plauſible in ſatisfying itching eares, and hypocriſie, making reſemblance to hate thoſe faults which he cenſureth in others.

Secondly they haue been trained vp in that trade, and there- 2
fore cannot leaue it, neither will they at any time neglect their markets for any mans ſake.

Thirdly, they haue not the power, and gouernment of their 3
owne tongues, but Sathan hath, whoſe gunpowder they are, and if he put fire vnto them, they cannot chuſe, but take. And that Saint *Iames* meaneth when he ſaith, *that the tongue is ſet on fire on hell*, that is by the deuill that helliſh ſpirit, Iam.3. 6. Now hee is a continuall falſe accuſer, and makebate betweene God and man, and man, and man, and friend and neareſt friend, and therefore looke for no fauour at his hands.

Inſtruction: Firſt, if wee would bee truſted, and haue men im- *Vſe.*
part their minds vnto vs without ſuſpicion of vs, let vs auoid the diſcourſes of other mens infirmities and labour rather to pray for them, and heale them. If we deſire that any man ſhould powre his counſels into our eares: let him not ſee one another mans dropping out of our mouthes; for then he may eaſily know what will become of his owne. 2. To be warie to whom wee commit our ſecretes: not to buſie talkers, not to idle walkers, not to them that are hollow harted. If they be briars, and thornes, as *Micah* Micah 7.5.
calleth them, if they carry prickes in their mouthes, and guile in their ſoules, and ſinne in their liues, truſt them not, put not confi-

dence in them, keepe ſhut the dores of thy lippes from them, though they were friends, though they were counſellours, though they were yoke-fellows. Eſpecially let vs not communicate with them in giuing them hearing of their vncharitable obtrectations, nor truſt them in our ſecrets: for it were iuſt and righteous that they ſhould be diſcloſed and brought to light for a recompence of our raſh and vnlouing credulitie.

Verſe 14. *Where no counſell is, the people fall: but where many counſellours are, there is health.*

WHere there is no counſell] Where godly and holie inſtruction for guiding the heart and behauiour, and graue and prudent aduice for gouernment of ſtate, either domeſticall, or publike, doe faile, there *the people doe fall*, that is, the gouernours themſelus, and they that are in ſubiection to them, doe runne into many miſchiefes of grieuous diſorders, and miſerable deſtruction. For what in that caſe is to be expected from ſuperiours, but violence and oppreſſion? And what from inferiours, but falſehoode and diſobedience? And what from all ſorts, but impietie and wickedneſſe? And what then from God, but heauie ſtroakes and puniſhments? *But where many counſellors are*, which be faithfull, and giue wiſe and wholeſome counſell, and that is alſo imbraced and followed, there is health, that is, religion and iuſtice, peace, plentie, and ſafetie, with God gracious fauour and bleſſing.

*Doct.* Nothing is more neceſſarie and profitable to any ſtate then good counſell, where this is wanting, there the beautie and brightneſſe of authoritie is away. The multitude of men, the wealth of the people, the ſtrength of munition, and the mightie force of armes will little auaile, if wiſe men be not imployed in the weightie affaires. And this cauſed *Salomon* to make ſuch
Eccle.9.17.18 compariſons, that lowly and ſubmiſſe words of a poore wiſeman, are more to be regarded, then the crie of an vnwiſe ruler, with his fooles about him; and that wiſedome is better then ſtrength, and alſo then weapons of warre.

*Reaſons.* First, there is no more ſufficiencie in any one man, by his owne
1 wiſedome without the aſſiſtance of others, well to order the matters

ters of a kingdome or ſtate, then for one alone to gouerne a great ſhip, without the helpe of other Sailers or officers. *Dauid* profeſſeth of himſelfe that he was wiſer then his enemies, then his teachers, then the auncient, and yet hee ſought out the moſt prudent men in all Iſraell, as *Huſhai*, and *Achitophell*, &c. to helpe him with direction. Who euer, but Chriſt, ſince *Adams* fall, could ſay that he was as wiſe as *Salomon?* who hopeth to bee ſo wiſe? Who can be ſo wiſe, vntill the end of the world? and yet he made choiſe of a counſell to conſult with, and to confirme himſelfe, and his people by. Pſal.119.98. 99.

Secondly, it is a mercie of God to a prince and people, to giue them many eyes to ſee with, many eares to heare with, many tongues to ſpeake with, many mindes to bee in continuall exerciſe for the benefit, ſafetie and preſeruation of the whole ſtate. 2

Thirdly, it is one of his great iudgements, either to take away counſellours from a nation, or to take away wiſedome from the counſellours. This was threatned to Ieruſalem and *Iudah* by *Iſaiah*, that the Lord of hoſts would depriue them of their ſtay, and ſtrength, the pillers of their countrie, and the props of their liues, and thoſe were not onely bread and drinke, and Warriours, and Iudges, but Prophets alſo, and the prudent, and the aged, and the counſellours, that ſo they might be eaſily caſt downe, yea ruinated, and brought to duſt of their owne accord. And concerning the other branch, that it ſhould not bee taken for an ordinarie and gentle correction to his faithfull children, but a rare and ſeuere puniſhment to his diſſembling enemies, he doth aggrieue it in another place, and ſet it forth in ſuch manner as might make it moſt fearefull to vs. *Behold,* ſaith hee, *I will doe a marueilous worke in this people, euen a marueilous worke, and a wonder: for the wiſedome of their wiſe men ſhall periſh, and the vnderſtanding of their prudent men ſhall be hid.* Iſa.29.14. 3 Iſai.3.1.2.

Inſtruction that the care of our ſelues, the regard of our friends, the loue to our neighbours, our duetie to Prince and Countrie ſhould ſtirre vs vp to call vpon God, that as he hath counſell and wiſedome, and is wiſedome and vnderſtanding, ſo he would ſtore vs with able and learned Miniſters for the Church, and wiſe and prudent ſtates-men for the Common-weale: and that they *Vſe.* 1.

which are so qualified, may haue their imployment, and they which are so imployed, may shew themselues faithfull, and they which are faithfull, may also bee prosperous. And so a lay man may bee a profitable Church man, and so a priuate person may doe good seruice to the King, and all his dominions.

2 Reproofe of such as trust to themselues, and their owne wisedome, and thinke they stand in neede of none. For their soules, they know as much as all the preachers can tell: for their behauiour, when to speake, and when to bee silent, what to say, and what to conceale; for actions to be performed, or forborne, they haue as much iudgement as any man: for their state, how to manage their affaires, and what course to take for their gaine, and commoditie, they will learne of none of them all, &c. And this is a fault the more to be reprehended, when they contemptuously reiect counsell which they may heare, when they despise the counsell of God which is offered vnto them, when like *Pharao* and *Achab*, they make choise of such as shall illude and deceiue them. For that is very vsuall and common with many purposely to associat themselues, and harken to such as will quell in them the feare of all Gods admonitions, rebukes, and threatnings, and giue them incouragement to any idolatrie, superstition, impietie, wantonnesse, vnthriftines, worldlines, and all such euils as their hartes are most affected vnto. But most of all is their sinne notorious, which doe not onely refuse counsell themselues, but wish and desire that there were no counsellours to others, especially such as might informe them in the way of God to bring them to saluation. They complaine of the number of preachers, one is sufficient for a whole countrie: they exclaime of the frequencie of preaching, one sermon is enough for halfe a yeere. And of this sort the bloudie traiterous Papists are offendours in a high degree. They doe not onely wish fewer counsellours, and lesser store of preaching, but seeke by violence to effect it, as their practises declare. They would in a moment haue destroyed the King, and all his Cleargie, all his priuie Counsell, all his Iudges and Counsell learned in the Lawes, all the great Counsell of Nobilitie, and Commons assembled in Parliament: and afterwards all the godly Ministers and Christians throughout the whole kingdome.

Are

Are theſe the friends of the people? Doe they wiſh them to bee preſerued from periſhing? doe they deſire and labour for the health of their nation?

Verſe 15. *He that is ſuretie for a ſtranger ſhall wholy be broken: but he that hateth thoſe that clap hands, is ſure.*

HIs purpoſe here is to giue men admonition to beware of ſuretiſhip: which he doth inferre by two reaſons, firſt, from the hurt and danger which they runne into that be not well aduiſed therein: and ſecondly, from the peace and ſafetie which they inioy that heedefully auoyd the perill thereof. Now he doth not abſolutely condemne all ſuretiſhip (for then would *Paul* haue neuer vndertaken for *Oneſimus*) but raſhnes onely therein, is that which is here, and in other places reprooued. For it may ſometimes be a worke of mercie to become ſurety, as well as to lende or giue. By *ſtranger*, is not meant all, or onely vnknowne perſons. For it may fall out to be a dutie of Chriſtian loue, that way to helpe and relieue ſome ſuch as we were neuer before acquainted with, and a neere neighbour, a familiar friend, a kinſman, a brother may in this caſe be a ſtranger to vs, when it is not ſafe to vndertake for him. As firſt, if there be like to grow detriment to the borrower, as taking mony, or any other commodities vpon hard conditions, and at vnreaſonable rates, or for needeleſſe expences, and vnthriftines, or any way to the hurt of his ſtate or conſcience. Secondly, if it tend to the hurt and damage of the lender, that he is in danger to be defeated of his owne, and to ſuſtaine loſſe by our meanes. If wee our ſelues are to bee intangled by it, the ſumme and valew of the debt beeing more then we are able either to pay, or well to ſpare: when ones owne creditours by that occaſion, muſt be defrauded of their due, when our wiues, children, and families which haue alſo an intereſt in our ſubſtance, ſhall be robbed of their portion and maintenance, and bereaued of the fruit of their owne labours. Then hee ſheweth a remedie againſt it, to hate ſuch as clappe hands, that is, to hate and feare to be clappers of hands our ſelues, for the ratifying and confirmation of promiſes in this vnaduiſed ſuretiſhip, and ſo we ſhall be Philem. ver. 18

safe and sure in this behalfe. Prouided yet, that we take not other courses that be couſen-germanes to it, & as dangerous and hurtfull as that is: as negligently without all care and regard to run into debts and arrerages, or ventrouſly without due conſideration of mens faithfulneſſe, and abilitie, to lend foorth our monie, wares, or cattell, and ſo to put our ſtate into the hands of ſtrangers.

*Doct.* A raſh ſurety doth ſeldome liue in peace without trouble and miſerie. Such a one, as though croſſes were too few, and too ſlow, doth increaſe and haſten them to himſelfe. He giueth his hand to his neighbour to put ſtrength and weapons into his neighbours hands, to his owne woe and vexation. Hereof hath

Prou. 6. 1. 2. *Salomon* ſpoken alreadie in the ſixt chapter: *My ſonne, if thou be ſuretie for thy neighbour, and haſt ſtricken hand with the ſtranger, thou art ſnared with the words of thy mouth: thou art euen taken with the words of thine owne mouth.* Before a man doth voluntarilie inſnare himſelfe, he is like a bird that hath the libertie of the whole ayre, to flie whether ſhee will at her pleaſure, but after hee hath bound himſelfe by promiſe and couenant, he is like a bird in a net, and in the fowlers hand, that may be killed, or caged, or giuen to children to play with, or otherwiſe dealt with according to the fowlers will, and yet the poore bird, is either ſurpriſed in her owne place, or allured by hope of foode to the baite, not knowing that ſhe is in any perill, whereas the ſuretie doth wilfullie caſt himſelfe into danger, being forewarned of the euent, that would follow, and hath no baite of any gaine, or benefite laide for him.

*Reaſons.* Firſt, he cannot but liue in great feare, and diſtraction of mind,
1 leſt the party for whom hee hath vndertaken, ſhould either faile of fidelitie, and purpoſely caſt his debt vpon him, or elſe ſhould come too ſhort of abilitie, and prooue vnſufficient to diſcharge it himſelfe. So if another be in want, then muſt he be in woe: If another be vnthriftie, then he muſt be vnhappie: if another be falſe, then he muſt needes be brought to a fall.

2 Secondly, God doth ofter by a prouidence whet the hearts of creditours, and ſharpen them againſt ſureties which fall into their hands. And that wee ſhould not deceiue our ſelues in this caſe,

with

with expectation of fauour, he telleth vs what is to be looked for, if we growe too bold and hardie. *Be not thou of them that touch the hand, nor among them that are ſurety for debts. If thou haſt nothing to pay, why ſhould he take thy bed from vnder thee?* Prou.22.27. Now this *why ſhould*, is ſet downe by way of threatning, according as it is alſo in ſome other places of ſcriptures, as when *Amaziah* ſaid to the Prophet, *haue they made thee the Kings counſellour? ceaſe thou: why ſhould they ſmite thee?* 2.Chro.25.16 And as hee giueth a caueat for euery one to take heede of entring into ſuretiſhip, or elſe not to thinke it ſtrange if they feele the ſmart of it, ſo hee granteth a warrant to creditors, to deale roundly with raſh ſureties, and not to be too ſparing of them. *Take his garment*, ſaith hee, *that is ſuretie for a ſtranger, and a pledge of him for the ſtranger.*

Thirdly, the miſerie which hee draweth vpon himſelfe, when the burden of payment, and forfeiture ſhall light vpon his backe, will pearce his heart with bitter griefe and ſorrow when his eyes ſhall behold the ſpoile of his goods, which either he hath gotten with labour and trauaile, or his friends haue giuen him in loue and kindnes, or his wife hath brought him in hope and expectation: when his eares ſhall heare the crie of his family and people that are frighted with terrors, and bitten with hunger, and ſtaruen with cold, and pinched with all kinds of want and penurie. When his bones and whole bodie ſhall be reſtrained from his houſe and houſehold, from vocation and calling, from friends, from recreations and comforts, from libertie and freedome, and clapt vp in a cloſe and loathſome priſon. 3

Reproofe of them that thinke it neither ſinfull againſt God, nor hurtfull to themſelues, but a point of good fellowſhip to yeeld to any mans requeſt in ſuch a matter. They take it to bee the eaſieſt way to gratifie a friend, and leaſt painful and chargeable to giue their word for him, yea and bloud alſo, if they be thereto required, as though the charges ſtood onely in beſtowing their breath, and their paines, in putting their hand and ſeale to the obligation. And who are moſt forward this way, but ſuch as haue leaſt care to performe their promiſe? And whom doe they ſo readily vndertake for, as thoſe that be ſhifters, and moſt vnable to keepe touch with their creditours? And as it falleth out in borrowing, Vſe.

rowing, ſo it commeth to paſſe in bayling, that bad priſoners haue ſeldome better ſureties, and men that be greatly offenſiue, moſt commonly offer their word for grieuous offendours. And many times they are caught, and brought into the trap, their deare friends of whom they had ſo good opinion, doe giue them the ſlip, and leaue them in the lurch, and then they clamour, and crie out, yet onelie againſt the vnfaithfulneſſe of the man whom they beleeued ſo well, but not againſt their owne vnfaithfulneſſe which would not beleeue God who forewarned them of the peril. Nay they ſtill cleare themſelues, though their owne follie conuince them, they giue commendations of their owne courſe, though friends, and family, though Gods teſtimony, and their owne wofull experience condemne them. Their loue, they ſay, and friendſhip, their good nature, and kinde heart hath wrought them all that ſorrow. Nay, rather it was crueltie, and vnmercifulnes to your owne houſe. It was raſhnes, a bad nature, and a fooliſh heart that brought you into all this miſerie. Haue you deſperately throwne your ſelues into a quicke ſand, and will you lay all the blame vpon others for your ſticking in the mire?

2 Defence of them which are not flexible to ſerue euery mans turne with bond and couenants, but will firſt know the perſon for whome they make their promiſe, and bee acquainted with his trueth and honeſtie, and with his ſtate and habilitie; and conſider alſo of their owne ſufficiencie, whether they can without any great difficultie, diſcharge that which they take vpon them, if their neighbour ſhould faile. But this is want of good neighbourhood, ſay they. But this is a point of good wiſedome, ſaith God, who neuer alloweth that neighbourhood for good, which ſwarueth from holy diſcretion. His commandement is: Thou ſhalt loue thy neighbour as thy ſelfe, and therefore no man is bound to loue him more then himſelfe, eſpecially when it is with hatred of himſelfe, and hurt of many others. And in deede it is no worke of true loue, but of fleſhly friendſhip: for loue doth neuer leade a man to doe any thing which God appointeth him to hate, as in this place he doth all raſh ſuretiſhip.

Verſe 16.

Verſe 16. *A gracious woman maintaineth* her *honour, as ſtrong men keepe riches.*

A *Gracious woman*] Which is indued with the feare of God, and the heauenly gifts of the holy Ghoſt, *doth maintaine*, that is, doth both get and hold a reuerend eſtimation and credit, *as ſtrong men* be of abilitie to obtaine wealth, and riches, and to defend that which they haue.

They which haue grace ſhall neuer want honour, how meane and weake ſoeuer they be. *Doct.*

Euen women which are of the weaker ſexe, euen poore women which neither haue parentage, nor beautie, nor rich apparell to ſet them forth, are yet reckoned among theſe honourable perſonages, if they haue vertue: for it is affirmed of euery one, without exception of any. S. *Peter* ſheweth that there is no wife, nor woman *of pure conuerſation, whoſe heart is uncorrupt with a meeke and quiet ſpirit, but ſhe is much ſet by of God, and become Sarahs daughter.* 1. Pet. 3. 2. 4. 6. And if the Lord ſo well like of all holie women, he doth as much take pleaſure in all holy men: if hee bee more delighted with their pietie and lowlines, then with gold and ſiluer, with pearles, and precious ſtones, and all coſtly apparell; then he will more eſteeme alſo of the faith and loue, and other graces of theſe, then of lands, and liuings, and titles, and all manner of dignities. If they be tranſplanted into *Sarahs* kindred, and haue her for their mother; then theſe are incorporated into *Abrahams* ſtocke, and haue him for their father.

First, they haue the conſtant ſpirit of God conſtantly reſting vpon them, and that is *a ſpirit of glory*, as Saint *Peter* teſtifieth, 1. Peter 4. 14. As therefore that can neither be kept away, becauſe Gods hand doth beſtow it; nor any plucke it away, becauſe Gods hand doth preſerue it: no more can any ſtay them from receiuing praiſe and commendation, nor wreſt it away from them, when they haue it. *Reaſons.* 1

Secondly, as the excellencie of Chriſtians doth not conſiſt in bodily pompe, but in ſpirituall graces, and behauiour; ſo it is not ſo much apprehended with mens eies, as with their hearts: their 2

consciences will praise them, when their tongues reuile them, as the Apostle saith: *we approoue our selues to euery mans conscience in the sight of God.* He would not appeale to their lippes before men, but to their soules before the Lord, and then hee was sure they would iustifie him, though in speech many would condemne him. Now if it bee so, a womans grace will as well shine to their hearts, as a mans: a poore bodies as well as rich folkes: so long as they remaine godly, aswell as when they began to be godlie, and more at the last then at the first, because their light groweth daily greater, and brighter.

2.Cor.4.2.

3 Thirdly, it is true honour to haue the loue and liking of God and good men for vnfained godlines and goodnes: and this belongeth to all the faithfull though neuer so meane and feeble. They will hold first the feare of God in their hearts, that none can bereaue them of it: they will diligently doe the will of God in their liues, that none can hinder them from it, and then who shall forbid God to shew them the light of his countenance? and who shall alienate the hearts of Gods people from wishing them well with kind and hartie affection?

*Vse.* 1. Reproofe of many sinnefull women which seeke not honour by vertue, but vanitie, not by grace but garishnes. And that they maintaine with might and maine, with heart and hand, with teeth and tongue, and all the meanes which may be deuised. It is as easie to take a purse of golde from a strong armed souldier, as to perswade them to leaue their pride and idlenes, and other wicked wayes which they vsually walke in.

But besides these, there are other men and women to be reprehended, which are as vnconstant in any good course, as these are obstinate in euill. They haue entred into the way of godlines with good commendation in the beginning, and leaue off the race in the middest, and runne to sinfulnesse with the world in the later ende. They cowardly suffer themselues to bee ouercome, and rifled, and robbed of their honour: their crowne is taken from them, their glorie is turned into shame and reproach, and causeth them to renounce that goodnes which before they seemed to imbrace: to forsake the fellowship of Christians with whom they were wont to conuerse: to neglect the duties of pietie which they

they were wont to exercise, to giue ouer the care of their families, which they were wont to instruct? Euen this that they would not be despised and brought to contempt: they would not be mocked and iested at for precisenes: they would not lose their credit, and good account. But is honour preferred by casting off grace? will this be a meanes to make them glorious, to shake off vertue, and shew themselues vicious? They vtterly deceiue themselues: for our text saith, that they must bee gracious persons which shall be able to maintaine and keepe their honour.

Consolation for poore maligned and molested Christians, whose weakenes the power of the wicked seekes to play vpon: and whose meanes the pompous proude worldlings haue in derision, and striue also to make contemptible to all others. The highest sinner in the world is vnable to hurt the lowest saint, or the most glorious among them, to shame the most feeble among these. It is as possible for a young childe by force to wring the weapons out of a giants hand, or take his monie out of his bosome, or to draw his heart bloud out of his body, as it is to strip any one good man of his reuerent estimation. And what meane they then to surmise that a few of them, and such as bee in disgrace with God, and all prudent men can bring downe, and cast to the ground the whole Church of God? Let them know that euery woman of Christ his armie, is too hard for any man, for all men, yea and for all the fiends that are in Sathans campe: Euerie child may bid defiance to him, and his whole host of persecutors. God is our defence, and therefore they cannot ouerthrow vs: God is our glorie, and accounteth vs for glorious, and therefore they cannot shame vs. In *Isaiah* this is often pressed, *Feare thou not, I am with thee, be not afraid, for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee, and helpe thee, and will sustaine thee with the right hand of my iustice. Behold, all they that prouoke thee, shall bee ashamed and confounded: and they that striue with thee shall perish. Feare not thou worme Iacob, and yee men of Israel: I will helpe thee, saith the Lord, and thy redeemer, the holy one of Israel. Thou wast precious in my sight, and thou wast honourable and I loued thee, &c.* Isa.41.10.11. 14 and 43.4.

1. For men that are trulie gracious and yet timerous, and full

of dread, leſt Sathan ſhould take aduantage by their imbecillity, and want of courage and learning to draw them to apoſtaſie, and back-ſliding. Conſider that hee can keepe backe none from obtaining honour, whoſoeuer either man or woman doth ſoundly endeuour to be godly, doth take a ſure and infallible way to bee well thought of: none euer failed, or was diſappointed of that ſucceſſe. Remember alſo that when God hath once giuen it, the diuell can neuer take it away from any, but it remaineth to their liues end, and to the worlds end, and world without end: then be well aſſured that is vnable to depriue vs of grace, and conſtant faithfulnes: for that is the ſpring from whence the other floweth: that is the bodie of the light, and the other but the beames which proceede from the brightneſſe of it.

Verſe 17. *He that is a mercifull man rewardeth his owne ſoule: but he that is cruell troubleth his owne fleſh.*

BY *a mercifull man*, is ment ſuch a one, as with a tender and pitifull heart doth good both to the bodies and ſoules of men according to their neede, and his owne abilitie. And freely alſo remitteth wrongs, and paſſeth by offences without reuengement. Where it is ſaid that *he rewardeth his owne ſoule*, the ſenſe is, that he procureth to himſelfe both ſoule and bodie a reward from God, and that as certaine, as large, and continuall, as if the fulneſſe of power were in his owne hand, to beſtow vppon himſelfe as much happineſſe for as long time as his heart could poſſiblie deſire.

*But he that is cruell*] Which either in violence or rigour vſeth to offer men hard meaſure, or ſhutteth vp his compaſſion from them that are in affliction, that he will no way releeue or ſeeke to comfort, troubleth his owne *fleſh*, that is, hurteth his owne bodie, and in like manner his ſoule alſo.

*Doct.* 1. Euery mans dealing with others ſhall rebound to himſelfe, whether it be in cruelty, or kindnes. Mercifull men ſhall receiue mercy from Gods owne hand, and from their brethren, whom he will ſtirre vp to ſhew loue and fauour vnto them: and thoſe which are fierce and boiſterous to others, ſhall not faile to be recompenced

ced in time: the Lord will be as seuere as they are cruell, and as strict in iustice to them, as they are rigorous in extremitie to others. And this shall not alwaies be reserued to the last day, or to their death, or to the torments in the world to come, but spoilers be many times spoiled in this life, oppressors bee oppressed, and tyrants be ouerthrowne by tyrannie. And therefore our Sauiour giueth an admonition, that they which would not bee iudged, should not iudge: they which would not bee condemned, should not condemne: they which would be forgiuen, should be readie to forgiue: they which would haue giuen vnto them, should giue vnto others. *For with what measure yee mete*, saith hee, *shall men measure to you againe*; Luk.6.37.38. To spare to speake of such arguments as may be gathered from the estate, and name of mercifull men, and the contrarie, because they follow hereafter in this chapter, and wee would not forestall our selues, we will hold our selues to the words as they are literally set downe in the text, and make it appeare that euery mans owne soule receiueth most good by the goodnes which hee exerciseth towards others.

First, it is a forcible meanes for grace to be increased in him, and Gods ordinances to be blessed to him. Hee heareth the word of God delightfully, and it worketh effectually in him. No people were more ready to distribute to the releefe of their brethren, then the poore Churches of Macedonia, and *Paul* had neuer greater effect and comfort of his ministerie then in the Macedonian Churches. So doe they pray with feruency and boldnes, and good hearts, then with mercie and fauour. *Dauid* had incouragement to call vpon God for the preseruation of his soule, when he could truely pleade that he was mercifull. *Cornelius* lost not his labour in praying, but found a comfortable and blessed successe when the Angell could tell him, that his almes came vp together with his praiers in remembrance before God. *Reasons.* 1. 1.Cor.8.1.2. Psalm.86.2. Acts 10.4.

Secondly, it maketh way for comfort in feares, temptations, and afflictions: it inuiteth godly men to repaire vnto vs, it maketh them desirous to refresh our hearts: it strengtheneth their hope in their supplications to God: it ministreth arguments for perswasion to our selues. Or if they should not come at vs, or 2

hope ſo well of vs, or deale ſo well with vs, yet out owne conſciences with the teſtimony of Gods ſpirit would ſupport our ſoules in greateſt extremitie, as *Iob* did find by happie experience.

Iob 31.

3 It is a treaſure that is ſafely layed vp in heauen for our glorie, whereof much will be giuen vs when we ſhall be diſſolued, and goe to Chriſt, but moſt of all, when we ſhall be reſtored, and Chriſt come to vs. At his glorious appearance, ſhall they appeare in glorie which haue been pitifull to his members, and fruitfull in mercie. They ſhall ſtand at his right hand, and to them ſhall he ſay, *Come ye bleſſed of my Father, inherit the kingdome which was prepared for you from the beginning of the world.* But all goeth croſſe with carnall perſons. The Lord giueth them no grace by his word and other ordinances, but challengeth them for comming into his houſe with bloodie hands. As he hath ſtopped his eares at the crie of the poore, ſo he ſhall crie himſelfe and not bee heard. Miſerie will miſerably torment him; his houſe is not a ſafe place for Chriſtians to reſort vnto; Lions dennes ſeldome fit for Lambes to be in: when good men be preſent, what can they ſay to mitigate his feares, or to leſſen his ſorrowes? If others be ſilent, will his owne conſcience ſpeake for him? Nay of all, that and the lawe of God will bee moſt forward and forcible to accuſe and condemne him. And then at his death he commeth into the caſe of the rich man ſpoken of in the Goſpell, that was tormented with flames: at the reſurrection that ſentence ſhall be pronounced vpon him, which was indited long agoe, *Depart from me ye curſed into euerlaſting fire, which is prepared for the diuell and his angels,* Matth.25.41. All this, vnleſſe he repent, is vndoubtedly belonging to him, beſides the continuall perill of ſtroakes and iudgements to light vpon his bodie, which euery moment may iuſtly be feared.

Matth.25.34.

Iſa. 1

Prou.21.13.

Luk.16.

*Vſe.* 1. Incouragement to goe cheerefully about the works of mercie, ſince they are ſo profitable to our ſelues. Some of them ſeeme to be very chargeable, and cannot be performed without expenſes: yet we gaine more than we giue, we receiue more than we lay out, we doe good to other mens bodies, but make the beſt match for our owne ſoules. Others ſeeme very painefull and require both trauell and patience, and many be altogether vnpleaſant to our

our nature: yet our wages doth counteruaile, and ouerpoiſe all our worke and labour: for we cannot put our bodies to ſo much toyle and trouble in any ſeruice of Chriſtian loue, as we ſhall obtaine to our hearts, delightfull pleaſures with reſt, and peace, and ioy and gladnes.

Conſolation to them that are fearefull of themſelues, and doubtfull of the ſtate of their ſoules, they feele not themſelues to beleeue, they finde not the pearcing of godly ſorrow, and therefore they call into queſtion their faith and repentance. But are they mercifull men? Doe they beare a burthen with the afflicted members of Ieſus Chriſt? They dare not ſay ſo directly, but their owne hearts tell them that they would mourne more with them, and doe more for them if they were able. Their deſires then and willingnes exceede their abilitie, and what ſurer note can there be of true mercie? 2

*Rewardeth his owne ſoule, troubleth his owne fleſh, &c.*] They are the beſt husbands which beſt prouide for the good of their owne perſons. To bee carried with carnall ſelfe-loue is a vice which is worthie to be condemned: to be lead with Chriſtian loue of ones ſelfe, is a vertue which is much to be commended. The one draweth a man to wickednes, the other driueth him from it, to goodneſſe: the one cauſeth him to be hurtfull to his neighbours, the other maketh him helpefull vnto them: the one ſeruing himſelfe ſinfully, doth vtterly vndoe himſelfe, the other applying himſelfe to the ſeruice of God faithfully, doth procure his owne bleſſednes for euer. When the Apoſtle would bring an argument that ſhould be perſwaſiue and forcible, and moſt likely to preuaile with rich men to worke mercie and liberalitie in them, he chuſeth this, *That they ſhould lay vp for themſelues a good foundation againſt the time to come, that they might obtaine eternall life.* It were to no purpoſe to lay vp onely for children, for heires, executors, or adminiſtrators, though they were ſure to haue children, and friends, and their children, and friends were ſure to inioy their poſſeſſions: but to inrich themſelues, is truely to be rich; and to haue ones wealth perſonally in himſelfe, and for himſelfe, and not onely about him, is to he rich in deede. *Doct.* 2. 1. Tim. 6. 19.

Firſt, the current or ſtreame of all the promiſes, and threatnings, *Reaſons.* 1.

nings, runneth this way: the reward of all obedience, and the punishment of all iniquitie tendeth to this purpose. Blessings vpon goods and cattell, vpon grounds, and fruite trees, vpon children and familie, are but appendances to the substantiall blessings which are conferred vpon soule and bodie, especiallie for the eternall state of both. And so when curses fall on the outward things of wicked men, it is, that they may gather weight by the way to presse the heauier vpon their owne persons.

2 Secondly, though one haue neuer so great plentie of earthly things, and abundance of all kinde of prosperitie, yet if himselfe be not his owne, but destructions, what treasure can doe him good? *What doth it profit a man to winne the whole world, if he lose his owne soule?* Matth. 16. 26. So, though one haue neuer so great penurie of earthly things, and abundance of all kinde of afflictions, yet if he preserue his quicke stocke, that is, himselfe from being a spoyle to sinne and Satan, no creature can hurt him, his miserie will droppe off from him, his crosses and sorrowes will vanish away, and come to nothing.

*Vse.* 1. Instruction to be diligent in all those meanes whereby we may best benefit our selues, with commodities of greatest valew. As first, to labour for true pietie and religion: to be well acquainted with God, and his holy word: to receiue instruction, to haue it in estimation, to obey it in constant exercise. And hereof the holie Ghost speaketh in the ninth chapter, *If thou bee wise, thou shalt be wise to thy selfe, and if thou bee a scorner, thou alone shalt suffer.* Secondly, the performance of the dueties of mercie, is a gainefull trade for the soule to thriue by: it bringeth in good store of comforts for present vse, and helpeth men to a stocke of ioy and happines for an other day. And therefore our Sauiour doth perswade vs to vse it, and gineth vs libertie to make our vse of it. *Sell that yee haue,* saith he, *and giue almes; make to your selues, bagges which waxe not old, a treasure that can neuer faile in heauen, where no theefe commeth, neither moath corrupteth*; Luk. 12. 33. It is dangerous, and sinfull to hoord vp much gold, and to keepe it too long; but safe and commendable to heape vp good workes in abundance, and neuer depart with them while the world standeth:

they

they ſhall be ſure to take no harme, and we ſhall bee ſure to want no good.

Reproofe of them that are frugall and thriftie, and neate, and husbandly for euery thing but for themſelues. Their earable is dunged, and tilled, and ſowne: their paſtures are mounded, banked, and trenched: their trees are pruned, their gardens are weeded, their cattell are carefully looked vnto: and all this while they ſuffer their hearts to be ouergrowne with ſinnes, as the wild waſt is with weedes and briars: there is no fence to keepe the diuell out of their ſoules: they grow like nettles and brambles to be cut vp, and caſt into the fire. Euery one of their horſes, euery ſheepe, euery cowe, euery ſwine and pig is in better caſe then themſelues. They deale, as if they ſhould trimme their haire, but wound their head: or be heedfull to their nailes, but let their fingers rot off: or keepe their garments whole, but permit their skin to be rent, and torne into peeces. 2

Verſe 18. *The wicked worketh a deceitfull worke: but hee that ſoweth righteouſneſſe,* ſhall receiue *a ſure reward.*

*THe wicked worketh a deceitfull worke.*] He is continually practiſing of ſome euill, which will neuer faile, to make his expectation to faile. *But he that ſoweth righteouſnes,* which conſtantly, and conſcionably is exerciſed in doing good, *ſhall haue a ſure reward,* partly in this life, with a competent meaſure of comfortable proſperitie, and perfectly in the life to come, with glorious immortalitie. The ſenſe will bee the better diſcerned, if the oppoſition be ſet downe in this manner: The wicked worketh a deceitfull worke by ſowing of iniquitie, and therefore ſhall bee deceiued in his reward: but the godly worketh a faithfull worke by ſowing of righteouſneſſe, and therefore ſhall receiue a ſure reward.

Vngodly men ſhall bee ſure to finde their ſinnes more dangerous and hurtfull then they looked for. Their familiar friend whom they loue ſo deerely, and make ſo much of, which is moſt in their mouthes, in their hearts, and in all their waies, it will ſurely ſhew them a ſlipperie tricke at the laſt. Saint *Paul* can ſay *Doct.* 1.

as much to this point, as any man, by the experience he had of it. Few had neerer acquaintance with it then hee at the beginning, and none had a greater breach with it in the ende then hee. And then he keepeth no counsell, but telleth all that hee found (and
Rom.7.11. God auerreth all that he telleth) *that sinne had deceiued him, and slaine him.*

*Reasons.* 1. First, it putteth them in vaine hope to effect many exploites which they can neuer bring to passe, but al their indeuours recoile vpon themselues. How many stones did *Saul* cast vp to braine *Dauid?* which all lighted on his owne pate. How small a matter did *Haman* thinke it to kill *Mordecay?* yea to destroy all the Iewes? which fell on his owne person, with his familie, and other friends. How sure were trayterous Papists, and vndoubtedly assured to blow vp the Parliament, and all estates of the kingdome? and yet of themselues diuers were blowne vp to the gallows, and all the rest, vnlesse they repent, are likely to be blowne downe to hell.

2 Secondly, they dreame of a greater felicitie and happines in their sinfull courses, then euer they can attaine vnto. When *Abimelech* was aspiring to the kingdome, when hee was perswading the Sichemites, when hee was murdering his brethren, and making them out of the way, what did he once thinke of, but of cap, and knee, of honor, peace, & safetie? He had concluded that there would bee no molestation and trouble, no breach of couenant, and disloyaltie, at least no perill of life, especially by the hand of a woman: that all his authoritie should bee brought to such an ebbe, as onely to haue power remaining to commaund his page to runne him through with his sword. The fit and passion of distemper that *Ahab* fell into when *Naboth* denied him his vineyard, declareth euidentlie how happie a man hee made reckoning to be when he should get it. And yet the occurrents which fell out at his taking of possession ouerturned all his happinesse. He intruded himselfe thereinto with iolity and mirth, but *Eliah* sent him out againe with heauinesse and griefe.

3 They presume of secresie, that their shameful facts shall be hidden, and neuer brought to light, whereas they cannot possiblie be concealed. For God himselfe doth see and obserue them, and

who

who ſhall forbid him to reueile and diſcouer them? *Adam* was away when *Caine* ſlew his brother, and *Eue* was not there, and *Abel* was made ſure enough for complaining, and *Caine* himſelfe was ſilent enough from boaſting of it, and no bodie elſe was in the fields, either to ſee *Caine* ſtriking, or to heare *Abel* crying, and yet out it came, aud knowne it is, and euery man can ſpeake of it. *Gehezi* made not all the town of his counſell whē he followed *Naaman* for the monie, he asked not his maiſter leaue, to goe after him, nor made report of his dealing, and ſucceſſe afterward; and yet *Eliſha* could tell him, and hath declared to vs, and all others whither he went, and how hee ſpeed, and what his intent was in the diſpoſing of his monie, namely, to buy oliues, and vineyards, and ſheepe, and oxen, and men-ſeruants, and maid-ſeruants, and to become a great man. What ſhould wee ſpeake of the plotting of *Ananiah* and *Sapphira*, and of *Dauids* adultery, and murder, which were ſo cloſely contriued as they imagined, that neuer any man ſhould haue had intelligence of them?

Fourthly, they haue taken ſecuritie for impunitie. Either they hope to eſcape all puniſhment, or elſe that it will be ſo light that they may eaſily beare it, or ſo ſhort that they ſhall quickelie paſſe thorough it. Whereas the Law of God threatneth the contrarie, 4 *That the Lord will make their plagues wonderfull, euen great plagues,* Deut.28.59. *and of long continuance, and ſore diſeaſes of long durance.* And if they will appeale from threatnings to promiſes, from the Law, to the Goſpell, from *Moſes*, to Chriſt, let them heare the ſentence that Chriſt paſſeth vpon ſuch manner of perſons: *They ſhall goe* Mark.9.44. *into hell, into the fire that neuer ſhall be quenched. Where their worme dieth not, and the fire neuer goeth out.*

Fiftly, they haue conditioned and indented with ſinne, before 5 they entered into the groſſe practiſe of it, that they would leaue it againe after a time, and ſo by repentance preuent both the ſhame and puniſhment. But they know not that all ſinfulneſſe is craftie, and cruell: when it hath them, it will hold them, and that faſt by the heart, and keepe them in perpetuall bondage and thraldome.

They may with as good ſafetie drink vp ſtrong poiſon, and preſcribe it a meaſure how farre it ſhall worke: or caſt themſelues

into the raging sea with limitation how deepe they will sinke, and how long they will make their stay there. All the seruants of sin and Satan are chained vp in prison and not at libertie to depart at their owne wils: for the will it selfe is kept in hold, and neuer released, before the Lord with a forcible hand of grace doe deliuer it.

*Vse.* 1. Instruction, not to suffer our selues to be abused by such a cousening companion. If a shifter should carrie about a pack of counterfeite wares, it were a poynt of wisedome to refuse to buie of him, especially if they were infectious, and such as would indanger our houses with the pestilence. Now there is not vnder heauen any Conicatcher that liueth so much by his wit, as sinne and wickednes doth by wiles: which doth not defraude men of their money, but of their saluation; which bringeth not plaguie stuffe to kill the bodie onely, but most pernicious corruptions to destroy both soule and bodie for euer.

And sith the workes of iniquitie be all so deceitfull, let vs hearken to the words of God, and the counsell of godly men, which we shall be sure to finde very faithfull. The perswasion of Satan seemed more plausible to *Eue*, than did the commandement of the Lord; but she had escaped the venome and poison of Satans perswasion, if she would haue giuen heed to the Lords commandement.

The note of wilfull vnchast persons in their miserie, will be the song of all other sinners that refuse to receiue admonition: *How*
Pro. 5. 12, 13. *haue I hated instruction, and mine heart despised correction! and haue not obeyed the voice of them that taught me, nor inclined mine eare to them that instructed me! Within a little space I am in all euill in the midst of the congregation and assemblie.*

2 Reproofe of them that vndertake the defence of subtill sinne, that offer themselues to be compurgatours for her; if she say that she is honest and vpright, they will sweare, they thinke it true. What euill is there, of Idolatrie, superstition, swearing, Sabbath-breaking, crueltie, wantonnes, yea abominable whoredome, pride and riot, but it shall haue proctors to pleade for it, and giue countenance to it? And most commonly they are the men, that of all others euery way for soule and bodie, for substance and credit,

haue been moſt plagued by her. Her craftines hath ſo inchanted them, that by her vſage ſhe hath gotten their harts for euer. Their wits, their tongues, their pennes, their practiſe of life, and all ſhall be altogether for her againſt God and his word, againſt all godly men, againſt all ciuill men, againſt their owne eſtimation and ſtate, comfort and ſaluation.

God is a ſure paimaſter to all that labour faithfully in his ſeruice. Though their ſtrength bee not great, nor their worke very much, yet if their deſires be ſound, and their endeuours vpright, their recompence will alſo bee certaine. The Prophet *Azariah* knew that he ſpake aſwell to poſteritie as to thoſe of his owne age, and as truly to Gods people as to King *Aſa* and his people: *Be ſtrong, and let not your hands be faint: for your worke ſhall haue a reward.* *Doct.* 2. 2.Chro.15.17.

Firſt, the couenant is plaine and without all doubtfulnes: there is no equiuocation in it, there is no mentall reſeruation to peruert the meaning of it. *Reaſons.* 1.

Secondly, the couenant maker is abſolutely perfect, and euery way all ſufficient. His wiſedome foreſeeth what things are fit to promiſe: his truth doth binde him to doe all that is promiſed: his mercie doth moue him to doe more than he promiſeth: and his power doth ſerue him to performe whatſoeuer his wiſedome ſeeth meete, his truth hath vndertaken, or his mercie willeth vnto his ſeruants. 2

Inſtigation to ſhew all diligence in doing good, and let no time ſlip away without ſome fruitfull exerciſe. Of men ſome hire their workfolks by the yeere, ſome by the half yeere, ſome by the moneth, ſome by the week, and ſome by the day: but God giueth vs wages for euery minutes worke, for euery moments worke, for euery gracious ſpeech, for euery holy thought, for imployment in our beds, for patience in our ſickneſs, for good vſage of recreations: there is no ſeaſon, no ſtate, nor place, wherein a good man may not be well occupied, for the increaſe of his wages. The ſame reaſon doth S. *Paul* vſe to incite the Corinthians, and all other godly Chriſtians, to bee very laborious and painfull in all good ſeruices continually, ſeeing there will be a reſurrection, and a retribution to euery man according to their waies. *Therefore my* *Vſe.* 1.

1.Cor.15.58. *beloued brethren* (ſaith he) *be ye ſtedfaſt, vnmoueable, abundant alway in the worke of the Lord, for aſmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vaine in the Lord.*

2 Incouragement to patience, though we ſeeme not to haue preſent pay for our obedience. Our wages is in a ſure hand, and will not faile to be yeelded vnto vs when our neede requireth it, or any vſe may bee made of it, for our beſt aduantage. Our wages is better than ordinarie; the whole crop that we ſow is giuen vs for our labour, and therefore let vs not be too haſtie to reape it before it bee readie. Good Farmers, indeede, pay the ploughmen ſooner than the corne is ripe, but cheaper thã the corne is worth: whereas God beſtoweth freely vpon his labourers all that they haue ſowen, it is their owne, and therefore let them tarrie till harueſt, and they ſhall finde their hire will farre ſurmount their trauels. This is the ground of the Apoſtles perſwaſion to the Galathians: *Let vs not be wearie of well doing: for in due ſeaſon we ſhall reape, if we faint not.*

Gal.6.9.

Verſe 19. *So righteouſneſſe leadeth to life, and he that followeth euill ſeeketh his owne death.*

THis verſe is inferred vpon the former, by way of explication, to ſhew what he meant by the deceiueable worke of the wicked, and the ſure wages of the righteous. And firſt he beginneth with the latter according to the manner of the Hebrewes, declaring that life, vnderſtanding thereby immortalitie and all the bleſſednes annexed vnto it, is that ſure reward which all godly men may vndoubtedly expect: and deſtruction both of ſoule and bodie eternally, is the ende whereunto the deceitfull worke will bring wicked men, which do ſo much deceiue themſelues by a greedie deſire of ſatiſfying their ſinfull luſts.

*Doct.* 1. The Lord hath not onely appointed a certaine reward, but a precious for his ſeruants. Nothing can be better then ſuch a happie life, and ſuch a happie life as he deemeth nothing to good for them to enioy. Hereof the Apoſtle ſpeaketh to the Romans: *The wages of ſinne is death, but the gift of God is euerlaſting life through Ieſus Chriſt.* Rom.6.23.

This

This is to ſet forth the bountie and ſuperabundant munificence of God the father, that the riches of his loue and goodnes, may be magnified aboue all creatures. Hee putteth into the hearts, and power of ſinfull men, to giue gold and ſiluer, to giue iewels and treaſure, to giue lands and liuings, to giue titles and dignities, to giue crownes and kingdoms; but neither men nor Angels could euer giue life to any, or keepe their owne by their owne power: the liuing Lord, and eternall God, is he that maketh all his Saints, as well in heauen, as in earth to liue eternally. *Reaſons.* 1.

Secondly the Lord Ieſus our Sauiour hath by his dying killed death, and bought life, and by his reſurrection triumphed ouer death, and won life for euery one of his members: yea he himſelfe is the life of his people which beleeue in him, who maketh them partakers, by an euerlaſting communion with him, of his owne life. He layd it downe for them, and tooke it vp againe for them, and imparts it vnto them: it is as poſſible for him to periſh, as them, and the whole Deitie as him. 2.

Thirdly, the ſeed of grace whereby the ſonnes of God are regenerate is an immortall ſeede, as S. *Peter* calleth it, and of the nature of the father that begetteth them, and therefore they muſt needes receiue life, and retaine life, and neuer after bee depriued of it. 3 1. Pet. 23.

Fourthly, without this life the children of God were in no better caſe then other creatures. For either they ſhould bee ſubiect to eternall death, which is the condition of the wicked reprobats, or elſe be extinct and aboliſhed with a finall diſſolution, which is the ſtate of vnreaſonable beaſts. 4

Inſtruction to labour for righteouſneſſe, and preciouſly to account of it, ſince it procureth ſo precious a reward to vs, and that from the fauour and kindneſſe of our gracious God. Hee that ſtriueth earneſtly herein may truely be ſaid to worke for life. For life is propoſed, and life he ſeeketh, and life he ſhall finde. If great wages were vncertaine, or certaine wages were but ſmall, it would be but a ſmall incouragemēt to take great paines; but ſeeing now it is ſo ſure, and ſo large, and ſo good, what is too much to be performed, and what is too grieuous to bee indured for the ſame? True it is that righteouſneſſe will call for trauell, and raiſe vp trouble, *Vſe.* 1.

trouble, but it is as true that all the trauels and *afflictions of this*
Rom 18. *present life, are not worthie of the glorie, which shall be shewed vnto vs.*
2. Cor. 4. 17. *For our light affliction which is but for a moment causeth vnto vs a farre most excellent, and an eternall weight of glory.*

If nothing but bare life were bestowed vpon vs, euen meere deliuerance from the danger of death, it were a benefit not lightly to be esteemed. It was said of *Lot*, that he was preserued from
Gen. 19. 16. destruction of Sodome, the Lord being mercifull vnto him; and yet his goods, money, and cattell which hee had in great abundance, were all destroyed. And the diuell spake the truth though in craft and malice, concerning *Iob*: skinne for skinne, and all that euer a man hath will he giue for his life. But when life is full of liuely comforts, when it is adorned with endles glory, when it is inriched with infinit treasures, what crosses, what pouertie, what temptations, what reproaches, what persecutions, and sufferings should diminish our desire of it, or make vs remisse in seeking for it?

2 Reproofe of them that care not whose seruice they come into, nor what worke they doe, so that they may haue nothing to doe with God and his seruices. They thinke no prison more streight, then the Church: no drudgery more grieuous then prayer, and hearing of sermons, singing of Psalmes, and sanctifying of the Sabbath: no bondage so burdenous as restraint from sinfull delightes, and fleshly pleasures: no miserie so bitter as sound Christianitie. They distaste with great detestation, all persons and actions, and gestures, and words that sauour of godlinesse, or haue any stampe and print of pietie in them; and as themselues abhorre all his worship, so they labour to discourage all others from doing him any seruice. These are they which are continually censuring of professours and deriding their precisenes, and insulting ouer their pouertie and meane estate. As though the Lord were not able to maintaine them that serue him, or else did grudge to bestow good things vpon them: as though he were a niggardly hard maister vnwilling to allow his people sufficiencie of food and wages. That were a great disloyaltie so to traduce a liberall Lord and free-hearted Prince who is readie to promote his seruants to liuing, though it bee but for a

time.

time: but it is an execrable impietie ſo to blaſpheme the moſt bountifull God, who giueth to euery one of his, both liuing and life, and all bleſſednes for euermore. But many of them ſay that they ſpeake by experience, themſelues haue been profeſſors, and as forward as the beſt, and they neuer got any good by it. And ſuch *Malachy* bringeth in quarrelling againſt God: *Your words*, ſaith he, *haue been ſtout againſt mee, yet yee ſay, what haue wee ſpoken againſt thee? Yee haue ſaid it is in vaine to ſerue God: and what profit is it that wee haue kept his commandement, and walked humblie before the Lord of hoſts?* Mal. 3. 13. 14. Who is ſo buſie to complaine for want of wages, as they which neuer performed any good worke? let not the exceptions of murmuring apoſtataes preuaile in the eares or harts of any that haue vnderſtanding. They were neuer of the family of God, though they crept into his houſe: they neuer did one good chare in obedience, and for what then ſhould they haue their recompence? They were alwaies proud hypocrites though they boaſt of humilitie, and why ſhould they be vſed as humble perſons? But be it that they pleade for others who haue faithfully kept the commandements of God, and truely been humbled in his ſight, and yet labour in a low eſtate and meane condition. Is there no profit in ſeruing of the Lord, vnles there be preſent preferment and earthly promotion? Our principall pay will bee in life, whereof wee haue part in hand by grace in our ſoules in this world, and the reſt is behind vntill the pay day in the world to come. So that a ſinner cannot diſcerne of the happineſſe of a Chriſtian, nor conceiue how God dealeth with him. For the comfort of the heart is a thing vnknowne to him, and the glorious life is hid with Chriſt in God, and ſhall not fully be ſeene before we appeare with him in glory. Col. 3. 3. 4.

*But he that followeth* | The more violent wicked men are in their ſinnes, the more neere they draw to deſtruction. When they courſe euill as the grayhound doth the Hare, and hunt for it, as the hungry lion, or other wild beaſt doth after his pray (for thence is the ſimilitude taken) then they will ouertake their death anon, and come ſpeedily to damnation. As the miſerie of the Ægyptians approached neere vnto them, ſo their crueltie increaſed towards the Iſraelites. And they were neuer more fiercely diſpoſed *Doct.* 2.

to kill and to slay, than when the waters were presently to doe execution vpon them. Warre was concluded without any great consultation; a mightie hoste was gathered, without any businesse of mustering; they were all in a readines to fight, without any further training. So stood the case with the Sodomites, they were all set on mischiefe and madnes immediatly before they were destroyed. And so it fared with *Ahab*, who tooke his farewell toward his voyage and death, with contempt of the word of God, and persecution of his Prophet. And so we might note *Belshazzer*, and *Haman*, and many others for this purpose, whom the Lord cut off in the very practise of some notable mischiefe.

*Reasons.* 1. First, this earnest pursuite of sinne with loue and liking of sin, proceedeth from an heart hardened with custome of sinning, being past remorse and feeling, and this will bring men *to worke all kinde of wickednesse euen with greedinesse*. And this is a forerunner of Gods iudgements.

Ephes.4.19.

2 Secondly, this following of euill is also accompanied with impudencie, and shamelesnesse: as their hearts cannot feare before God, so their faces cannot blush before men. And what

Ierem.8.12. state these men stand in, the Prophet *Ieremy* sheweth: *Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay they were not ashamed, neither could they haue any shame: therefore shall they fall among the slaine: when I shall visite them they shall be cast down, saith the Lord.*

3 Thirdly, this manner of sinning crieth in the eares of the Lord, as it is said of the Sodomites, and prouoketh him to anger, and therefore will draw downe a speedie punishment vpon them.

*Vse.* 1. Instruction, if we loue our selues, our life and saluation, that we flie from euill, and follow it not: for it will follow vs too fast. We shall goe no whither whiles wee carrie this sinfull flesh about vs, but it will be at our heeles, yea in our hands, and heads and harts, and whole soule and bodie. Euen the best may say as *Paul* did, *I*

Rom.7.21. *finde that when I would doe good, euill is present with me.*

But much more is it present when we are not so well disposed, though indeede it be not then so easily destroyed: and therefore since it will intrude it selfe vpon vs against our willes, let not vs

play

play the parts of the wicked, to take Satans place and become tempters of our ſelues.

Terror for the workers of iniquitie, which beſtow great paines to doe themſelues great hurt, which will not bee ſtopped from the ſeruice of ſinne, and therefore cannot be ſtaied from the puniſhment thereof. What doe they elſe but fall into phranticke paſſion of deſperate perſons, which ſeeke all opportunities to murther themſelues? They make euery delight and pleaſure a corde to ſtrangle themſelues with: euery luſt a knife to cut their owne throates: euery commoditie a well to leape into: their meate and drinke to be a poyſon to their ſoules, and hurtfull to their bodies by ſurfeiting and drunkennes, and ſuch like abuſes. 2

Verſe 20. *They that are of a froward heart are abomination to the Lord: but they that are vpright in their way, are his delight.*

BY *froward in heart*, he meaneth not onely ſuch as are inclined to anger and bitterneſſe, which are of a crabbed, ſowre and churliſh diſpoſition; but all that are wilfull in any ſinfull courſe, though with neuer ſo great mirth and laughter. Yea many times exceſſiue pleaſure, and ſporting, and merriment, with good fellowſhip, as men account it, is the very ſubiect of their frowardnes, and that which they ſo obſtinately ſtand in. And though they pretend reaſon for their doing, and ſeeme ſmoothly to defend it, without peruerſenes, yet the heart being ſetled in reſolution of it owne purpoſe, the Lord taketh notice of it, and therefore abhorreth them for the preſent, and will make his iudgements to manifeſt his deteſtation of them hereafter. *But they that are vpright in their way* and heart, (as the other are froward in heart and behauiour) are greatly beloued of God now, & ſhall more fully ſee, and feele, and enioy the comfort and happineſſe of his fauour in time to come.

Whoſoeuer is giuen to frowardnes, is wholly voide of vprightnes. A ſincere hearted Chriſtian may through infirmitie, fall into a fit of frowardnes for a time, as *Aſa* did, when he caſt the Prophet into priſon, for reprouing his ſinne: but to haue the habite of it to be froward, is oppoſed as contrarie to being vpright. So *Doct.* 1.

were the qualities one set against another in the third verse of this chapter: *The vprightnes of the iust shall guide them: but the frowardnes of the transgressors shall destroy them.* So are the persons contrarily dealt with as contraries by the testimonie of Dauid: *With the vpright man thou wilt shew thy selfe vpright: with the pure thou wilt shew thy selfe pure; and with the froward thou wilt set thy selfe to wrestle.* Psal. 18.25.26.

*Reasons.* 1. First, the vpright man hath a respect to all the Commandements of God, with desire and endeuour to keepe them, as *Dauid* professeth of himselfe: *All his lawes were before me, and I did not cast away his commandements from me. So was I vpright with him, and haue kept me from my wickednesse,* Psal. 18.22.23. Whereas the froward person doth either reiect the whole law of God, or else retaineth, yea maintaineth at least some one sinne wittingly, because he may know, and willingly, because hee refuseth to obey, against some one commandement.

2 Secondly, they which are vpright doe ground their actions and waies vpon arguments and reasons, and therefore they striue to haue them as plaine and sound as may be: and they which are froward doe ground their reasons and arguments vpon their waies and actions, and therfore they labour to haue them as craftie and subtill as may be.

3 Thirdly, they which are vpright will desire to haue the truth reueiled to them, and yeeld to it when it appeareth, and lone them the better that shall informe them in it. And they which are froward will desire to haue the truth suppressed, and contend against it though it bee manifest, and like them the worse that shall shew it vnto them.

*Vse.* Instruction, not to giue too much credit to froward men, nor too large a testimonie of them. If wee see that they will not bee brought to a Christian conuersation without, we may know also that they haue an vnchristian conscience within: for their heart is neuer better than they are willing their waies should bee. And why then should we esteeme them to be men of plaine meaning, when God himselfe telleth vs that there is no plaine meaning in them? Why should we praise them whom he doth discommend? why should we cleere them whom he conuinceth? why should we

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iuſtifie them whom he condemneth? And yet it is a fault, though much againſt pietie, that carrieth a great colour and gloſſe of loue and charitie. He is a very honeſt man (ſay they) but yet giuen to gaming too much, no man can diſſwade him from it. It is his only fault (ſaith another) that he is a great ſwearer, and cannot be brought to leaue it. He is a right good man (ſaith a third) and euery way deſerueth praiſe, ſauing that hee is no bodie at Church: he cannot abide thoſe ſermons, and Preachers: ſay all what they can, he is ſtill at defiance with them all: and ſo they, as much as in them is, ſtand for them that go about to trauerſe their inditement againſt the Lord and all his faithfull Miniſters.

The loue of God is not according to that which men haue of outward things, but to that which they are in hart and behauiour. Many froward men are great in the world, and yet are all gentlie abhorred of him: and moſt vpright men are of the meaner ſort, and yet nothing the leſſe in his fauour. And this is *Dauids* meaning when he ſaith, *The Lord will trie the righteous, but the wicked and him that loueth iniquitie doth his ſoule hate.* The righteous are his gold, and therefore he will refine them vntill they bee perfectly purged from al droſſe: yet he loueth them as well in the fornace as in the treaſurie: but as for the vngodly, howſoeuer hee ſeeme to ſpare them, yet he doth not like them: and though the might of his hand bee not yet vpon them, yet the hatred of his heart is ſtrongly againſt them. *Doct.* 2. Pſal.11,5.

The righteous ſtand before him in the merits and glorious righteouſneſſe of Ieſus Chriſt: he is his welbeloued ſonne, and in him he is well pleaſed with all his members: and the froward and wicked ſtand in their owne impure and filthie nature, hearts, words and actions. *Reaſons.* 1. Matth.3.17.

Secondly, the righteous are his owne obedient ſonnes that do faithfully ſerue him: and the froward are his rebellious enemies that fight continually againſt him. 2

Thirdly, he cannot looke on the righteous, but he muſt behold the gracious worke of his owne hands in their new birth and ſecond creation: but in the froward he ſeeth the work of the diuell, whereby they are depraued and made moſt vile and ougleſome. 3

Inſtruction, that wee conforme our ſelues to the example of God. *Vſe.* 1.

God in this behalfe: if froward persons bee abomination to him, let them not be in estimation with vs: if he loath them, as we doe snakes, and toads, and all kind of serpents, let vs not loue them as delectable things, wherin men reioyce and take pleasure: but let vile men be vile in our eyes, and let such as feare the Lord bee regarded of vs. Far bee it from vs that we should grace and countenance those whom God doth proclaime to be odious and abominable: that we should associat our selues and bee found companions with those whose sight is offensiue vnto him, that wee should receiue them into our seruice which refuse to enter into Gods: and God reiecteth thē as altogether vnfit for his family. But well is it with our soules, whē we can truly say with the Pro-

Psal.16.3. phet, *All my delight is in the Saints, and in them which are excellent.*

Psal.101.6. *Mine eyes shall be to the faithfull in the land, that they may dwell with mee: he that walketh in a perfit way, he shall serue me.*

2 Terror for those obstinate wicked persons which trust that by stiffe standing to their tacklings they shall grow into credit and good account with the world, as indeed their successe is very oftē answerable to their expectation. But what gaine they by getting mans fauour and Gods displeasure? when basenes and follie did smile vpon them for a moment, and glorie and wisedome doe frowne on them for euer? It was the case of the Scribes and Pharises, they iustified themselues before men, all did praise them; but though they were so highly esteemed among men, yet they were abomination in the sight of God: our Sauiour told them so

Luk.16.15. in their prime and full blossome, but they little thought it to be true. But what is become of al their salutations and titles, and praises now? hath not the Lord sent a blast vpon them, and caused their glory to wither away? is not all their excellencie turned into contempt, and their names made a by-word of reproach in all Churches?

3 Consolation to vpright hearted men, how poore soeuer they be, & how basely soeuer the world thinketh of them, it is enough for them that the Lord taketh pleasure in them. Whē *Ahashuerosh* had but once graced *Mordecai*, al the citie quickly took notice of it, & he was presently great, notwithstanding he was a captiue and a condemned man, and of a nation that was euery where despised:

and

and was there more force in the fauour of a mortall man to make him honorable whom he bare no great affection vnto, than there is in the loue of God being ſo tender and large to his owne children? what then though they ſhould bee dealt with, as S. *Iames* ſpeaketh, that in reſpect of gold rings and goodly apparell, which rich men preſent haue on, they ſhould bee put vnder the foote-ſtoole, or thruſt out at dores? yet let them know ý God hath choſen them to bee rich in faith, and heires of the kingdome, which he hath promiſed to them that loue him. What though they ſhould not onely be diſpiſed, but maligned of them that be ſtronger than themſelues? yet let them not bee diſcouraged at their power that are againſt them, but comforted in his good prouidence that is for them. If this be true that they bee Gods delight, then this will be alſo as true, that God will be their defenſe. *Ahab* was an heauie friend to *Micaiah*, and profeſſed his hatred towards him, and threatned miſchiefe to him: and yet Gods fauour preuailed more for his ſafetie, than *Ahabs* diſpleaſure could doe for his hurt. Iam. 2. 3. 5. 2. Chron. 18.

Verſe 21. Though *hand* ioyne *in hand, the wicked ſhall not be vnpuniſhed, but the ſeede of the righteous ſhall eſcape.*

THough vngodly men haue many friends, and ſuch as bee mightie: though they ioyne all their forces together to aide and defend one another, or all of them one, yet they ſhall not bee able to miniſter any helpe or ſuccour when the Lord taketh them in hand to plague them. On the other ſide, though righteous men ſeeme to be in great perill, and haue fewer friends, and thoſe alſo poore and feeble, yet they ſhall get out and be deliuered, and not onely ſo, but their children and poſteritie alſo ſhall be preſerued: So that whereas many ſtrong wicked men cannot deliuer one, one weake godly man ſhall deliuer many.

Vngodly men are nothing the better for all the friends they haue: their plotting together and combination is of no force at all for their preſeruation, but rather for their ruine. The Lord by the Prophet *Iſaiah* doth deridingly challenge, and after a ſort dare the enemies of the Church to attempt any thing againſt his people. *Doct.* 1.

Isai.8.9. people vpon their perill: *Gather together on heapes O ye people, and ye shall be broken in peeces: gird your selues, and ye shall be broken in peeces: take counsell together, yet it shall be brought to nought: pronounce a decree, yet it shall not stand.* As if he should haue said: Make your selues as strong as ye can, with multitude, leagues, armour, consultations, authoritie, and by what meanes ye can, and as oft as ye will; yet all shall doe your selues no good, and nothing shall doe my seruants harme. When the Canaanites and other inhabitants of that land were to be punished, how many Kings with their people banded themselues together against *Ioshua* and the Israelites? and yet it was to no purpose: they did but offer themselues to the sword: that stood *Ioshua* in good steede; for it would haue been long before hee could haue found them out, and slaine them singly man by man.

*Reasons.* 1 First, this association and confederacie doth not breake off Gods resolution, either by pacifying his anger, or daunting his courage: it rather incenseth him to greater displeasure, because they will stand at defiance with him, and offer to make head against him. And that more incourageth him (as wee may speake to the capacitie of men) to take the opportunitie of their insolencie, and puissant assistance, because their ouerthrow will be so much the more for his glorie.

2 Secondly, it is impossible for them, be they neuer so many, to diminish his power and make him the weaker. When al Sodome and the other cities by it were vngodly and wicked, hee could as easily destroy them with fire and brimstone, as though they had been but a few. When the whole world was giuen ouer to sinfulnes and rebellion, he could as easily destroy it with raine and water, as if it had been but one man.

3 Thirdly, they cannot thereby increase their owne power, to make themselues able to incounter with him, and so to auoide his stroakes by resistance: for strength and might consists not in the multitude of men, but is limited by Gods hand, who onely hath the bestowing of it, because it is his owne; and to whomsoeuer he giueth it, from the same he can at his pleasure take it, when it is abused by them. Were it not so, the diuell and all his hoste about him would trie what they could doe, before they would

would be caſt into that miſerable and deſperate torment at the laſt day. There was neuer ſo great an armie, as that will be of reprobate men and angels, and if any thing would make them to ſtriue, it would be the damnable eſtate whereunto they ſhall bee adiudged then preſently to enter: but they ſhall ſenſibly ſee and feele it to be bootleſſe, and therefore they will neuer attempt any ſuch matter.

Inſtruction to vſe better meanes to be freed from puniſhment, and that is to take heede before how we fall into ſinne. So did *Iob* prouide for his impunitie, by preſeruing his eyes, his heart and his hands from luſt and lewdnes, from violence and crueltie, from Idolatrie and couetouſneſſe, and all ſuch miſbehauiour, as might prouoke Gods wrath againſt him. And if that be paſt, wee haue done ſuch things alreadie: runne not from God to friends for to ſaue vs: let vs not ſeeke the helpe of their hands, vnleſſe it be to be lifted vp with ours in prayer, but runne to God by faith and holy humiliation. No other courſe wil ſecure vs from iudgements deſerued; neither the multitude of friends, nor the meanes they can make, nor their tender affection towards vs, will preuaile to ſuccour vs, if we fall into the hands of the liuing God. *Haman* in all mens iudgement was ſurely backt, and ſo were *Baals* prophets, and yet committing ſinnes of death, they receiued the ſentence of death, and felt the execution of death in the preſence of thoſe whom they moſt depended vpon. *Vſe.* 1. Iob.31. 1.King.18.40.

Admonition to beware how wee take vpon vs the defenſe of ſinful men to keepe thē from ſuch correction as is due vnto them; for we loſe our labour if wee ſeeke to ſtay them from all puniſhment: many by eſcaping the parents rodde doe come vnder the Magiſtrates whip, and many by eſcaping the whip doe come to the gallows, and many by eſcaping the gallows doe fall into damnation: for they are depriued of thoſe medicines which might haue wrought a cure in their ſoules. And what doe wee in this caſe but withſtand the diſcipline of God himſelfe? How would the Magiſtrate take it if the offenders whom he is to puniſh ſhould be pluckt away and reſcued out of his hands? do not they which make ſuch attempts bring themſelues into the compaſſe of the ſame faults which the malefactors were to ſuffer for? whatſoeuer 2

the others were condemned for, these haue now made themselues accessarie vnto, whether it be fellonie or treason or any other grieuous offence: and yet it is a thing little feared of men: they which haue neither mercie nor courage to deale in the cause of a poore oppressed innocent are readie and bold to protect and maintaine those, which are impious and sinfull and walke in such lewde and wicked waies as are offensiue and abominable to God and man. How many are kept from their condigne punishment by the countenance of great mens cloath and seruice? How many doe words and letters preuaile for? how many are cleered by corrupt Iurors, who lay the guiltines of many foule and fearefull faults vpon their owne consciences?

*Doct. 2.* *But the seede of the righteous, &c.* The best way for any man to doe his children good, is to bee godly himselfe. Hee that setteth himself to serue God, & to seek euerlasting saluation, is busily occupied in prouiding for his posteritie: & that which his soule shall find to bee most comfortable to him, his seed shall find to be most profitable to them. The same spirit of trueth which here doth affirme this, doth in diuers other places confirme it, as in the twen-

Prou.20.7. tith Chapter of this booke: *He that walketh in his vprightnes is iust, and blessed shall his children be after him.* He needed not to say that he himselfe is blessed, though he knew it to bee so, and so likewise meant it: for true iustice is euer ioyned with true blessednes: but to prooue the fulnes of his owne happie estate, he sheweth that it shall flow ouer also to his children. So is it said in the

Psal.112.1.2. Psalmes both concerning himselfe and his: *Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord, and delighteth greatly in his commaundements: his seede shall be mightie vpon the earth: the generation of the righteous shall be blessed.*

*Reasons.* 1. First he himselfe is become the sonne of God, and so his are Gods sonnes children, and then consider the abundant loue euen of earthly parents to the seede of their sonnes and daughters: *Manasse* and *Ephraim* were as deere to *Iacob* as if he had been

Gen.48. their immediate parent, and so were *Ephraims* and *Manasses* children to *Ioseph*: though *Naomi* was but mother in law to *Ruth*, yet how acceptable was *Obed* the sonne of *Ruth* vnto her? though *Moses* was but the adopted sonne of *Pharaohs* daughter,

though

though of another nation, though of ſuch a nation whom they held as bondſeruants, though of a people that was an abomination to him and his people, though ſuch a people as he feared and ſought to deſtroy; yet *Pharaoh* loued him and preferred him, and ſhewed all kindnes to him for his daughters ſake, when ſhe had taken him to be hers.

Secondly, a Chriſtian parent is moſt fit and competent to deale with his children to bee ſeruiceable to God: and to deale with God to be mercifull to his children: great is the force of a fatherly admonition, when a godly father admoniſheth: and maruelious is the efficacie of a parentlike bleſſing, when a holy parent doth bleſſe the fruite of his bodie. So much doth *Iacob* intimate to *Ioſeph* for his exceeding great comfort: *The bleſſings of thy father ſhall be mightie with the bleſſings of my elders: vnto the end of the hils of the world, they ſhall be on the head of Ioſeph.* That prophane *Eſau*, as wicked as hee was, did aſſure himſelfe that he ſhould be the better for his father *Iſaacks* bleſſing, if he could obtaine it, and therefore wept for ſorrow when he went without it. 2 Gen.49.26.

Thirdly, the children of religious and faithfull parents are intituled to the promiſes and bleſſings of God both for ſoule and bodie, as appeareth in the holy records, by that argument S. *Peter* perſwaded them to beleeue, whoſe hearts were pricked at his doctrine: *To you is the promiſe made* (ſaith he) *and to your children, and to all that are a farre off, euen as many as the Lord our God ſhall call.* And by the like reaſon the ſeruants of the Lord who giue themſelues to pietie and mercie, are comforted notwithſtanding their great afflictions, and the floriſhing ſtate of the wicked: *The righteous is euer mercifull and lendeth, and his ſeede enioyeth the bleſſing.* 3 Act.2.39. Pſal.37.26.

*Vſe.* 1. A reproofe of their follie and foule impietie that are ſo farre deuoted vnto their children, and carried with ſuch a deſire of their aduancement, that they caſt off all deuotion towards God, and neglect the good care of their owne ſaluation. They feare not to caſt themſelues deepe into hell, ſo that they may raiſe vp their name and their houſes high vpon earth. And for this cauſe they giue ouer themſelues to miſerable niggardlines and pinching, to burdenous vexations and trauels, to ſhamefull iniuſtice and falſe-

hood, to violent oppreſſion and crueltie. They haue a good peniworth, as they thinke, and buy very cheap, when they can gaine worldly wealth by loſſe of their heauenly happineſſe: when they can purchaſe liuings to their poſteritie, by paſſing away the life of their ſoules. But hearken a little ye ſillie wretched creatures: O fooliſh men when will you begin to learne wiſedome? your thriuing is waſtfulnes; your riſing is falling; in purchaſing you forfeite; in ſemblance of loue you practiſe hatred; in ſeeking to ſet vp your ſeede by ſuch vnlawfull courſes, you take the way to pluck them down, and vtterly to vndo them for euer. No man but *Ieroboã* could euer haue wrought ſo much miſchiefe to *Ieroboams* familie: and *Ahab* and *Iezabel* were moſt mortall enemies of their race and linage: and *Nebuchadnezzar* prouided woe and miſerie to his iſſue that was yet vnborne when he died. And by what meanes did all theſe perſons bring all this hurt vpon their ſeede? by relinquiſhing religion and the true ſeruice of God: by exerciſing tyrannie againſt the ſeruants of God, and greedie getting of goods to make themſelues and their children great: that which in taunting manner is charged vpon one of them, is euery way verified vpon euery one of them: *Ho, he that coueteth an euill couetouſnes to his houſe, that he may ſet his neſt on hie, to eſcape frõ the power of euill. Thou haſt conſulted ſhame to thine owne houſe, by deſtroying many people, and haſt ſinned againſt thine owne ſoule.*

Hab.2.9,10.

2 Conſolation to religious parents whether they bee rich or poore: whether their children be dead or liuing, whether the liuing be godly or ſinfull: If they haue wealth, they may hope it ſhall be for the vſe of their ſonnes or daughters: if not, that the al-ſufficient God will prouide for them ſufficiently without their helpe or ſubſtance. If they be dead, they haue great incouragement to comfort themſelues in the perſwaſion of their ſaluation. If they liue, though wee ſhould die and depart hence, yea and leaue them in afflictions and diſtreſſes, yet this comfort we haue, that as the mercie of God to our ſelues was not aſſured vnto vs for tearme of life, but eternally for euermore: no more is his goodnes to ours to ceaſe with our life, or bee determined at our death. Poore lame *Mephiboſheth* had a father liuing, yea an euerliuing father that appointed him to be well prouided for, and maintained

maintained, when good *Ionathan* that begot him was ſlaine and gone. The godly poore Prophet that left his wife ſo far in debt, that neither ſhe was able to ſatiſfie it, nor the creditor willing to bee ſatiſfied, without taking of her ſonnes to bee his bondmen; yet had taken order before his death for the payment of debt, for libertie of ſonnes, for maintenance of familie, namely by poſ-
ſeſſing the conſtant fauour of God, which both conueyed him to 2. King 4.
heauen, and remained with his houſhold here in earth. If they ſhould be wicked, yet the Lord hath grace enough and power enough to make them good. It is without trouble or charge to himſelfe, or hurt to his creatures, and why ſhould they not then both earneſtly pray for it, and conſtantly waite for it? what if it be not wrought at firſt? yet it may bee effected at the laſt: and ſo long as they haue a naturall life, ſo long may their friends hope for their euerlaſting life. *Iacobs* ſonnes were not all godly the firſt yeere, nor in many yeeres, and yet not without goodnes in their latter yeeres. And ſo ſtood the caſe with *Manaſſe* the ſonne of *Ezekiah*, and many other holie Chriſtians.

To godly children of religious parents, who beſides the ſtate 3
they haue in the promiſes of God in regard of their owne faith-
fulneſſe, haue alſo a portion therein by right of their progeni-
tours, and ſo they haue a double portion, and may warrantably take double comfort, if withall they can yeeld to God his double praiſes.

It was a ſtrong and mightie prayer that *Iacob* made and full of aſſurance of hearing, and happie ſucceſſe, when hee remembred that the Lord was the God of his father *Abraham*, and the God of his father *Iſaac*, and had promiſed to doe him good, and former-
ly performed, it and would yet be more mercifull to him and his Gen. 32. 9. 10.
ſeede after him: it is not a trifle or matter of ſmall conſequence 12.
to bee able truely to pleade before God ones owne faith and in-
tegritie, and the pietie or godlines of their father or mother, or others of their anceſtors.

Verſe 22. *As a iewell of gold in a ſwines ſnout: ſo is a faire woman that lacketh diſcretion.*

AS a ring of gold, or any other ornament, doth not adorne, but misbecome a ſwine, no more doth beautie, ſtature, ſtrength, wit, apparell, wealth, or any other externall thing bring true praiſe, or commendation either to man, or woman which wanteth true wiſedome, or vnderſtanding.

*Doct.* 1. *Swines ſnout, &c.*] God maketh no more reckoning of ſinfull people without vnderſtanding, then of brute beaſts without reaſon. Though they haue humane nature, and carrie the forme and ſhape of men and women with beſt ſhew, yet if there bee nothing in them but that which is humane, euen fleſh and bloud and ſinfulnes, no beautie, nor brauerie, no perſonall excellencie, or artificiall additaments, make the beſt of them, is more acceptable to him, than is the baſeſt of all the other creatures. It is a very homely compariſon wherewith the holy Ghoſt diſgraceth wicked men in this booke, and yet ſo true, that hee auoucheth it againe in the new teſtament: *The dog is returned to his owne vomit, and the ſow that was waſhed, to the wallowing in the mire*, Prou. 26. 11. 2. Pet. 2. 22. And as in theſe places for impuritie they are likened to filthie beaſts: ſo in others, for hurtfulnes they are reſembled to fierce and venomous beaſts, as Leopards, Lions, Wolues, Beares, Dragons, Aſpes, Adders, Vipers, and Cockatrices.

Iſai. 11. 6.

*Reaſons.* 1. Firſt, all thoſe creatures, for their parts, haue euer ſince the beginning of the world ſtood and continued in the ſtate wherein they were firſt made, & that depriuation which is in the nature of any of them, proceeded not from themſelues, but from the fall of man, which hath not only deformed himſelfe, but diſtempered euerie thing about him: and the cauſe why they haue not knowledge and vnderſtanding, is, that they are not capable of it: but wicked men are wholy degenerated from their originall excellencie, and haue defaced the image of God in their owne ſoules. They haue loſt their iuſtice and fallen to vnrighteouſneſſe: they are depriued of holines, and become prophane: all ſound vnderſtanding

ſtanding is gone, and nothing is in them but ignorance of Gods holie will, and of the myſteries of ſaluation. And therefore *Ieremy* ſaith, that euery man is a beaſt by his owne knowledge. And *Zophar* in the booke of *Iob* proceedeth further and ſheweth what kind of beaſt he is moſt like. *Vaine man*, ſaith hee, *would bee wiſe, though man borne* (that is, in his owne eſtate not regenerate) *is like a wild aſſe colt.* Ierem.10. Iob 11.12.

Secondly, euery dumbe creature according to his kinde, performeth the will of God without any reſiſtance: Whereas wicked men rebelliouſlie doe ſtriue againſt their maker, and contemptuouſly tranſgreſſe his commaundements. 2

Thirdly, the vile eſtate, and miſerable condition of graceleſſe men, how great ſoeuer, doth make it appeare that the Lord preferreth them not before contemptible beaſts, becauſe at the leaſt their end will be as bad as the worſt of theirs. And this doth God himſelfe declare in the Pſalmes: *Like ſheepe they lye in the graue, death deuoureth them.* Man is in honour, *and vnderſtandeth not: he is like to beaſts that periſh.* They lie in their graues as the carcaſes of rotten ſheepe in a ditch, and death maketh a pray both of their ſoules and bodies, as crowes, and kites, and rauens, and dogs do feede vpon carrions. 3 Pſal.49.14.20

Inſtruction not to ſatiſfie our ſelues in this, that hauing ſpeech, and reaſon, we go beyond all fiſhes, birds, beaſts, and all creeping things, vnleſſe alſo by grace and ſpirituall gifts, we goe beyond all vnregenerate men. *Vſe.* 1.

To acknowledge with thankfulneſſe the great fauour and goodnes of God towards vs, when hee hath tranſformed vs into the ſhape of Chriſtians, and the Image of his owne ſonne, that we may be acceptable to him. 2

Neither beautie, nor other outward gifts doe any good to the owners that are deſtitute of wiſedome. All ornaments can neuer make a foole to be comely, no more then a ſilken coate can make an Ape to be manly, or a ſweete bath can make a blacke Moore beautifull. If wiſedome be wanting, we may truely ſay with *Salomon: Vanitie of vanities, and all is vanitie.* *Doct.*2. Eccl.1.2.

Firſt, the perſon of the man commendeth all outward things, and onely grace and wiſedome make his perſon commendable. *Reaſons.*1

And

And in this ſenſe it is ſaid in the booke of Eccleſiaſtes, that *it is the wiſedome of a man that doth make his face to ſhine.* Nothing but ſound vnderſtanding and holy behauiour can poſſibly make either man or woman to be eſtimable, and worthie to bee looked on. It is as truly to bee affirmed of one ſexe as another, and no leſſe of one ſtate than of another, *that fauour is deceit, and beautie is vanitie: but a woman that feareth the Lord ſhe ſhall be praiſed.*

Eccl.8.1.

Prou.31.

2 Secondly, through want of wiſedome, the good gifts of God be defaced (as the ſwine would not ſpare to bring the iewell with her into a filthie puddle, or to wallow with it in the moſt loathſome mire) and ſo they are the leſſe eſteemed in better men, which are worthily adorned with them.

3 Thirdly, in this caſe they peruert them vſually to the hurt of others: as beautie is made a ſnare to entangle mens eyes and affections: wealth and power bee weapons of oppreſſion: wit and policie be nets for fraude and deceite: fine ſpeech and elocution be calles to allure men to the hurt of their ſoules and eſtates. And the ſame is verified of many things which *Salomon* ſpeaketh of one: *As a thorne ſtanding vp in the hand of drunkards: ſo is a parable in the mouth of fooles.* A drunken companion with a thorne, or goade in his hand, doth ſometimes prick and pierce himſelfe, and ſometimes hurt them that bee neere about him: and ſo ſtandeth the caſe with ſinners that can ſpeake wittily, and yet want a ſober heart to guide their tongues chriſtianly: they wound their owne ſoules, and depraue good cauſes, and ſet a colour vpon ſinne, and much traduce the names of many blameleſſe perſons.

Prou.26.9.

4 Fourthly, themſelues of all others are in moſt perill, and like to receiue the greateſt hurt by theſe meanes. Pride hath a doore ſet open to it for free acceſſe to the heart, where there is any externall excellencie without internall ſanctitie: And Shame hath a way prepared for it to follow after, when they haue great things for many mens eyes to looke vpon, and little diſcretion to vſe and manage them. Nothing is more behouefull for a foole than to be obſcure in the darke, that his follie ſhame him not in the light. How much better had it been for *Abſhalom*, *Achitophel*, *Adoniiah*, *Ieroboam*, and *Achab*, with others of like ſtate and behauiour,

hauiour,if they had been deformed in bodie,and weake in capacitie,and meane in condition,than to haue been ſo conſpicuous, and of ſuch grert note, and now to be ſo contemptible, and of ſuch great infamie?

Inſtruction,that ſithence wiſedome and grace do giue honour, and life, and good effect to all the inferiour gifts of God which are but temporarie, and not euerlaſting, that therefore before all the reſt wee ſhould moſt labour for wiſedome and grace. If other things be alreadie beſtowed vpon vs, ſeeke to obtaine and increaſe theſe heauenly ornaments, to giue a luſtre to the naturall gifts wherewith the Lord hath qualified vs,and to ſeaſon our outward poſſeſſions to our vſe and comfort. *Wiſedome*, ſaith Salomon, *is good with an inheritance, and excellent to them which ſee the Sunne*. His meaning is not that wiſedome is good to them onely that haue inheritances,but that it is good, yea neceſſarie for them which haue inheritances to get wiſedome that will make their poſſeſſions good, and that will help them to the good vſe of their poſſeſſions. And ſo wiſedome is good with ſtrength,wiſedome is good with wit,wiſedom is good with gentrie, wiſedome is good with dignitie,and wiſedom is good with beautie. It doubleth the greatnes and value of euery good bleſſing that God beſtoweth. *Dauids* victories and power bee renowmed by wiſedome: *Salomons* glorious kingdome is made memorable by wiſedome: and ſo is the proſperitie of *Iob*, and *Abraham*: and ſo is the aduancement of *Ioſeph* and *Daniel*; and ſo is the beautie of *Heſter*, and *Sara*. *Vſe.* 1. Eccl.7.13.

Reproofe of them that bee afraide of nothing ſo much as of grace and heauenly wiſedome, becauſe it will croſſe their pride and ſenſuall luſts. It will forbid the nice dames that make idols of their owne bodies to beſtow ſo much time in tricking vp themſelues,with pranking and painting: and therefore they haue no more deſire to receiue godlineſſe, than to depart with beautie. They are as willing that the ſmall pockes ſhould deforme their faire faces,as the word of God ſhould informe and cleanſe their foule conſciences. *Vſe.*

Verse 23. *The desire of the righteous is only good, but the hope of the wicked is indignation.*

WE must beware here that we iustifie not al the wishes and desires to be good, which righteous men conceiue, nor condemne all to be vnrighteous which conceiue any wishes and desires that be not good: for then should *Dauid* be excluded out of the number of the righteous, or else his desire of hauing *Bathsheba*, or wishing to know the number of the people should be allowed. But he vnderstandeth the maine streame of their desires, the course and current of their hearts is to godlinesse and goodnesse, though sometimes they corrupt nature in themselues, and the tempestuous temptations of Satan doe violently driue their thoughts another way; which is wholly contrarie in the wicked. For they desire nothing but mischiefe and euill, and therefore in the end they shall receiue nothing but miserie and punishment, which will be so great and so grieuous, as will make them raue and rage with madnes and furie, especially because they looked for a better state. Thus then standeth the opposition: the desire of the righteous is onely good, and therefore their hope shall end in consolation: but the desire of the wicked is onely euill, and therefore their hope shall end in indignation.

*Doct.* Godly men are most desirous to please God, and God doth graciously accept of their desires in the best manner. They are not willing to allow a thought in themselues that should not be lawfull, and he is not willing to looke vpon, or speake of their vnlawfull thoughts. Though diuers things be many times amisse in their minds, and in their mouthes, and in their deedes, yet there is faithfulnes, and therefore he passeth by their faults. So he testifieth of *Dauid*, that he kept his commaundements, and followed him with all his heart, and did onely that which was right in his eyes. 1. King. 14. 8.

And so he testifieth of all the godly Israelites in the booke of Numbers: *He seeth none iniquitie in Iaacob, nor any transgression in Israel.* And so he testifieth of all vpright hearted people whomsoeuer Numb. 23. 21.

ſoeuer in the Pſalmes: *Surely they worke none iniquitie, but walke in his waies.* Pſal.119.3.

Firſt, he imputeth that to euery man, and counteth it his, which proceedeth from the predominant power in him. In the regenerate nothing is theirs but their fruite, and nothing is their fruite, but the worke of the ſpirit. And ſo though the vnregenerate doe many good things, yet nothing is theirs but their fruite, and nothing is their fruit, but that which groweth from the fleſh. *Reaſons.* 1.

Secondly, he ſeeth the force and violence of originall corruption, how it aſſaulteth them, how it woundeth them, how it taketh them captiues againſt their willes, and therefore rather pitieth them, than accuſeth them. And hence it is that S. *Paul* by good warrant, for example to all other good Chriſtians, doth once and againe diſclaime all that euill from being his, which he was vnwillingly drawne vnto: *If I do that which I would not, I conſent to the law which is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but ſin that dwelleth in me*, Rom. 7.16.20. 2

Thirdly, he knoweth that they will purſue their owne ſinfull actions, and thoughts with hue and crie: and if any deſire breake out from them that is not good, they will ſend out many others after it, for humiliation, and pardon, and purging of their hearts. And therefore ſince themſelues be ſo ready to complaine to him, he will be ſparing of complaints againſt them. 3

Conſolation to the poore innocent ſeruants of God who yet are defamed with all kinde of falſe accuſations. They are called hypocrites, heretickes, rebels, traytors, and all that naught is. *Dauid* was ſo charged by *Saul* & his courtiers: *Paul* was ſo charged by the malitious Iewes: the godly Iewes ſo charged by *Haman*: Chriſt himſelfe was ſo charged by the Prieſts, Scribes, and Phariſes: all good men muſt looke to bee ſo charged by all ſorts of ſinners. Well it is for them that their hearts can witneſſe that their deſires are onely good, and better that the Lord ſeeth it, and beſt of all that they haue ſuch a God as will openly publiſh it. If he knew as much by vs as the wicked ſay againſt vs, or would refuſe to teſtifie that hee knoweth for vs, as euery one of vs were more righteous, ſo ſhould hee be of all others moſt ignominious. For no creature that euer God made (the diuell not excepted) is ſo *Vſe.* 1.

much ſpoken againſt, as good men are, neither any ſo bad a name as they, if the violent tongues of malitious perſons may make a good mans name to be bad. If ſentence ſhould paſſe vpon the godlie at the laſt day, aocording to the verdict of them that are not friends or parties, we ſhould be all caſt, and condemned, not one man would be acquited. But here is an helpe againſt all theſe ſurmiſes of purpoſes within, and accuſations of behauiour without: let appeale be made to him that beholdeth all, and he will cleare the righteous from all theſe imputations. This brought *Iob* to ſpeake ſo confidently of his cauſe; *Oh that I had*
Iob 31.35. *ſome to heare me; behold my ſigne that the Almightie will witnes for me: though mine aduerſarie ſhould write a booke againſt mee.* This brought *Dauid* with ſuch affiance to repoſe himſelfe vpon God:
Pſal.7.8. *Iudge me Lord according to my righteouſneſſe, and according to the innocencie that is in me.* And this brought *Iſaiah* to vſe ſuch liberty and boldnes in challenging his quareilous enemies. *Hee is neere*
Iſai.50.8,9. *that iuſtifieth me: who will contend with me? Let vs ſtand together: who is mine aduerſarie? Let him come neere to me. Behold the Lord will helpe me: who is he that can condemne me?* And yet this is not all the comfort that a iuſt man hath, though it be great, but is increaſed by the teſtimonie which God giueth of their deſires, that ſeeing they are good, they ſhall eaſily be graunted, and ſeeing he taketh notice of no more then of thoſe which are good, their other infirmities ſhall be no impediment. And therefore if they aske euerlaſting life, why ſhould they make queſtion whether they ſhall haue it? If they ſeeke ſpirituall graces at his hands, what ſhould hinder the finding of them? If they craue the good bleſſings for themſelues and theirs, for greater experience of his fauour in things of this life, what ſhould ſtay them from comming? When his iuſtice pronounceth their deſires to be good, will not his goodneſſe bee readie to fulfill them, eſpecially his
Pſal. 145.19. trueth hauing promiſed the performance thereof?

2 Terror for vngodly men which haue many ſinfull deſires in their hearts againſt Gods glorie, and ſeruices, and people. Their ſoules wiſh nothing ſeriouſly, but that which God hateth, and godly men feare, and pray againſt. Libertie for lewdneſſe they deſire as life, & thoſe that like not of wicked waies, they abhorre

as

as much as death. Nothing pleaſeth them ſo well as to heare of the ſinnes or ſorrowes of profeſſours, and nothing grieueth them ſo much as to heare that wicked perſons are either reclaimed from their diſſolute behauiour, or puniſhed for their ſhameſull offences. Surely theſe men are not righteous; their deſires are not good, and therefore whatſoeuer is in them, or commeth from them is euill, and diſpleaſing to God, and dangerous, and damnable to their owne ſoules. As touching the other clauſe, for the euent of wicked mens hopes, ſee the ſecond doctrine of the tenth chapter, and the firſt doctrine of the eighteenth verſe of this chapter.

Verſe 24. *There is that ſcattereth, and is more increaſed; but hee that ſpareth more then right,* commeth *ſurely to pouertie.*

THey that diſperſe their goods, this way and that, beſtowing them vpon ſuch as are in want and neceſſitie, or otherwiſe imploying them for the publike benefit of many, they that are readie and willing to part with their goods or monie for the relief of ſuch as are in want or neceſſitie, or to any other good vſes, are ſaid to ſcatter them: and ſuch take the beſt courſe to increaſe them, as ſowing of corne is a meanes to helpe a man more and more.

And this he deliuereth with great wiſedome and warineſſe, ſaying, that ſome are more increaſed, and not all: for many ſcatter vpon dice, and cardes, and dogges, and whores, and ſuch like, and they may looke to bee ſtript of all the reſt, rather then to adde to that which they haue. On the other ſide hee that keepeth in that which he ought to lay out, and ſpareth that which duetie requireth him to ſpend, doth play the euil husband for the impouriſhing of his owne eſtate.

True liberalitie and mercie is not an hurt, but a furtherance to mens eſtates. Neuer any man was made the poorer by one penie for giuing of many, in due manner, but diuers haue bin the richer. The ſame rule holdeth in this caſe, as in all other the good gifts of God, that the good vſage of them doth vſually bring an augmentation of them. So it is to be found in learning and know- *Doct.*

ledge, and in what good thing is it not so to be found? we neede not trauell farre for proofe of our point in hand, but onely steppe ouer to the next verse following, and there wee shall haue a confirmation of the same. There we shall see that they which feede others shall be fat themselues (for so is the sense) and they which are as good streames to send out streames, shall haue such supply, as that they shall not be dried vp, but bee as well able to flow at the euening, as they were in the morning, and to morrow as much as to day, and the next yeere no lesse than in this.

*Reasons.* 1. First, they haue the promise of blessing from God which imploy their substance to the glorie of God, and the benefit of his poore seruants which are in want. *Honour the Lord,* saith he, *with thy riches, and the chiefe of all thine increase. So shall thy barnes bee filled with abundance, and thy presses shall burst with new wine.* And the Apostle S. *Paul* giueth as large an incouragement to the Corinthians in the new Testament. *Hee that ministreth seede to the sower, will minister likewise bread for food, and multiplie your seed, and increase the fruites of your beneuolence.* No field is more fertile to sow in, then the poore members of Iesus Christ: no seede is better then mercie, and Christian liberalitie: no weather or watering is more seasonabe then Gods blessing: no crop of corne is so commodious and profitable as is the reward which God giueth both to soule and bodie.

Prou. 3.9.10.

2.Cor.9.10.

2 Mercifull men procure praises to God to be plentifully offered, and prayers for themselues for all good happinesse: and therefore how can they but thriue and prosper? That reason doth *Paul* presse in many words to the Corinths, that they might know that their liberalitie was not in vaine. He will increase the fruites of your beneuolence, that in euery sort ye may bee made rich to all liberalitie, which causeth, through vs, thanksgiuing to God, 2.Cor.9 11. He dwelleth vpon the argument, and vrgeth it in euery verse to the end of the chapter.

3 Thirdly, the mercie of God towards other of his people which are in neede, doth often cause mercifull men the more to abound in riches. Since their desire is to be helpers of their afflicted brethren, their power shall serue to performe it: and since they haue begun it so well alreadie, they shall be able to doe it better hereafter,

after. And for this cauſe they are promiſed *all ſufficiencie* in all things, that they may abound in euery good worke. As it is written, *He hath ſparſed abroad and giuen to to the poore: his beneuolence remaineth for euer*, 2.Cor.9.8.9. He ſheweth by the teſtimonie of the Pſalme, that their communicating to the poore did not bring them to pouertie, that they ſhould be compelled to giue vp giuing, but did eſtabliſh their ſtate, that they might continue their beneuolence as long as they liued: for ſo much doth *euer* ſeeme to import in this place.

Inſtruction, to ſtriue againſt infidelitie which hindreth mens hearts from the cheereſulnes of mercie, and ſtaieth their hands from many good contributions, and keepeth them wholly from the exerciſe of liberality. They loſe by theſe meanes the opportunitie of much gaine, they debarre themſelues from that plentie which they might enioy. They will not receiue ſo much good as God will affoord them, becauſe their hearts wil not affoord them leaue to beleeue, that there is ſo good a reward prouided for them that affoord reliefe to poore Chriſtians. The Holy Ghoſt in the booke of Eccleſiaſtes aſſureth vs that nothing is loſt that is beſtowed in goodnes. He willeth men *to caſt their bread vpon the waters, and after many daies they ſhall finde it againe*. It is a kinde of prouerbiall ſpeech with vs, for fruitleſſe charges, to ſay, I might as well haue throwne my mony downe the riuer. But in this caſe though we ſeeme to throw our mony, or foode, into the riuer, or ſea it ſelfe, wee ſhall haue it reſtored with aduantage, yea, and when wee thinke all is forgotten. And therefore he proceedeth to incourage men that they ſhould lay about them, and not ſpare, in the exerciſe of liberalitie. *Giue* (ſaith he) *to ſeuen, and alſo to eight*. Beſtow vpon many, and when thou haſt done that, make not an end, but giue to more than thou didſt before. As if hee ſhould haue ſaid, beſtow as much ſeede as thou haſt land to lay it on: and get as much land as thou haſt ſeede to ſow it with. But infidelitie can hold no longer in hearing this, but out commeth her worthie queſtion: How ſhall I liue my ſelfe hereafter, if I giue away all now? who knoweth what hard times be comming? Now he ſtoppeth her mouth with retortion of her owne reaſon. No man knoweth what euill daies may come, and therefore wiſe-

*Vſe.* 1

Eccleſ.11.1,2.

dome

dome would that we ſhould make prouiſion for our ſelues before hand. And nothing is ſurer laid vp, then that which is charitablie laide out; that will ſerue for a deere yeere, and a rainie day, as wee are wont to ſpeake in our prouerbe.

2 Reproofe of the follie of miſerable niggards, who being greedie of getting more, know not how to vſe that which they haue, and therefore take the way to conſume all. The one halfe of our text is a threatning againſt them, and all the reaſons which did confirme the good eſtate of liberall perſons, do as much conclude the hard caſe of pinching neere miſers, by the contrary. They put their talent to no good vſe, and therefore may daily looke to haue it taken away from them. They intitle themſelues to the threatnings and curſes of the law, and therefore cannot auoide the iudgements, whereof the ſtroake of pouertie and needines is one among others. Sighes and complaints goe vp to God againſt them, but few prayers, and no thankſgiuing at all for them. Their benеuolence and goodnes doth not ſtand the poore Saints in ſuch ſteed, as that the Lord for their ſakes ſhould commit any part of his ſubſtance to their hands, or leaue that with them, which they haue fingred alreadie.

Verſe 25. *The liberall ſoule ſhall waxe fat, and hee that giueth plentifullie ſhall powre forth.*

THeſe words haue affinitie with the former part of the verſe next before, and are ioyned to it partly in way of explication, and partly in way of illuſtration. And therfore firſt he ſheweth who obtaine that bleſſing to increaſe by ſcattring, & that is they whoſe liberalitie beginneth at their hearts: and then he declareth the proſperous ſucceſſe thereof by a ſimilitude from wel-ſprings which receiue as much water inwardly, as they ſend forth outwardly, which, if they ſhould faile of iſſue, would alſo faile of fulnes, the waters diuerting their courſe ſome other way, where they might haue better paſſage, or elſe infuſing themſelues in the earth, and mould of the adiacent places round about, and ſo make a quagmire. The ſame compariſon doth *Iſaiah* vſe for the ſame purpoſe: *The Lord ſhall ſatiſfie thy ſoule continually in drought,* Iſai. 58. 11.

*and*

*and make fat thy bones: and thou ſhalt bee like a watred garden, and like a ſpring of water, whoſe waters faile not.*

He that expecteth comfort for ſound mercie, muſt not onelie applie his hand, but his ſoule to the exerciſe of well doing. That is the ſeate of loue, which giueth life to all good actions, and without which in regrad of themſelues, it is as good neuer a whit, as neuer the better. For though a man ſhould *feede the poore with all his goods, and haue not loue, it profiteth him nothing.* *Eſaias* conditioneth with thē who would haue the Lord to powre forth his mercies and bleſſings vpon them, that they ſhould not onely powre out their foode and victuals, but their ſoules alſo to the hungrie. Iſa.58 10. *Doct.* 1.Cor.13.3.

Firſt, there is required a needefull worke of the ſoule in this ſeruice, and that is wiſedome and diſcretion. So is a mercifull man commended in the Pſalmes: *A good man is mercifull and lendeth, and will meaſure his affaires by iudgement.* And ſo is a liberall man deſcribed by the Prophet *Eſaias*, *That he will deuiſe of liberall things.* He will meditate where his gifts may beſt be placed: what is fitteſt to be giuen: how much is meete for him to contribute: in what manner he ſhould performe it. *Reaſons.* 1 Pſal.112.5. Iſai.32.8.

Secondly, compaſſion muſt be ioyned with it, that the helper, and the partie holpen, may mutually communicate their caſes each with other: he that is in proſperitie bearing a part of his brothers burthen, and he that is in aduerſitie receiuing a portion of his neighbours bleſſings. This could *Iob* truly teſtifie of himſelfe, that he vſed *to weepe for them that were in trouble, and his ſoule was in heauineſſe for the poore.* 2 Iob 30.25.

Thirdly, it muſt be ſeaſoned with cheerefulnes, that it may bee more comfortable to man that ſhall receiue it, and likewiſe more acceptable to God that will reward it. Hereof doth the Apoſtle admoniſh the Corinthians to an eſpeciall regard, ſaying; *As euery man wiſheth in his heart*, ſo let him giue, *not grudgingly, nor of neceſſitie, for God loueth a cheerefull giuer.* 3 2.Cor.9.7.

Reproofe of them whoſe ſoules haue neuer any dealing in doing of good, vnleſſe it be to peruert all with Phariſaicall hypocriſie and vaine glorie. They giue hand ouer head to tagge and ragge, without difference of any, except they ſhut out the beſt, *Vſe.* 1.

and beſtow on the worſt, frowning on them that are the moſt honeſt, and feeding of them that of all others are the moſt vnworthie. They contribute to good vſes with no leſſe difficultie, than if a diſtreſſe of a fine or amercement were to bee extorted from them. Commiſeration and pitie are meere ſtrangers vnto them, their hearts haue no acquaintance at all with them.

2 Conſolation to poore men, that they are not excluded from the grace and bleſſedneſſe of being merciful, though they attaine not to the ſtate and abilitie of being wealthie. Mercie is not placed with mony in the purſe, but dwelleth with loue and kindnes in the heart. He that can mourne with ſuch as doe mourne, hee that can pray for them that bee in diſtreſſe, he that can any way ſeeke to comfort the afflicted, may truly be ſaid to haue a ſoule of bleſſing, and is of God himſelfe eſteemed mercifull. The ſucceſſe which mercifull men ſhall finde for their owne eſtate, hath been alreadie declared in the former verſe, and therefore in this may be paſſed ouer.

Verſe 26. *He that withdraweth corne, the people will curſe him: but bleſſing ſhall be vpon the head of him that ſelleth corne.*

IT is not vnlawfull to keepe in corne, as *Ioſeph* did in the time of plentie to bee prouided againſt ſcarcitie and dearth: but when we may ſpare it, and others neede it, then to withhold the ſelling thereof in hope to raiſe the price, this tendeth to a common hurt, and therefore will cauſe a common complaint of the people againſt vs. But on the other ſide, bleſſing ſhall be on his head that ſelleth corne, he ſhall not only haue the good teſtimonie and prayers of men beneath, but the bleſſing of God himſelfe from aboue deſcend vpon him. Prouided that his heart be vpright therein, not ſo much reſpecting the price in ſelfe-loue, as the profiting of his brother in Chriſtian charitie: and that he vſe all other due circumſtances accordingly. As to ſell that which is good at a reaſonable rate, and performe it in due ſeaſon, and full meaſure, and ſuch like.

*Doct.* 1. They are after a ſort publique enemies of the countrie, that procure, or ſeeke for a dearth. The Lord would haue vs to col-

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lect and deeme what harme they doe by the effects that enſue thereupon. The exclamation and outcrie, not of one perſon, or familie, but of the multitude of the people, doth intend in this caſe ſome grieuance among them. Scarcitie of foode is one of the moſt grieuous iudgements wherewith the Lord is wont to plague a nation, and how can we then take them for our friends, which wiſh ſo grieuous a puniſhment? *Salomon* by prayer made a way for the prayers both of the whole people, and the particular friends and members thereof, to come to God for remouall of ſuch a miſerie; then what are they to be accounted that ſend forth deſires, and put forth endeuours to call for it, and bring it? 1.Reg.8.38.

Firſt, they are heauie aduerſaries of the poore, and practiſe to adde ſorrow to them that are alreadie in ſorrow. The greateſt weight of this burthen is like to light vpon their backes, becauſe they are leaſt prouided of armour to keepe it off. An example thereof is to be ſeene in the prophecie of *Amos*, where the ſelfe-ſame effect is wrought by the ſelfe-ſame meanes which wee are now in hand with: *Heare this, O ye that ſwallow vp the poore, that ye may make the needie of the land to faile, ſaying, When will the new Moone be gone, that we may ſell corne? and the Sabbath, that we may ſet foorth wheate, and make the Epha ſmall, and the ſhekell great, and falſifie the weights by deceit? and buy the poore for ſiluer, and the needie for ſhooes: yea and ſell the refuſe of the wheate.* They had long kept vp the corne for this purpoſe to haue it grow deare, and now the time ſerued the turne, and it muſt bee opened in all the haſte, they thought the daies of the Lords owne ſeruice too long, vntill they were at it. And now woe to the poore, for the plot is laid to pray vpon them. They ſhall buy the refuſe deare, which is little worth, and ſell themſelues cheape to pay for it. *Reaſons.* 1. Amos 8.4.5.6.

Secondly, they are pernicious to men of all ſorts and conditions, vnleſſe it be to a few of thoſe few which haue corne to ſell. And to this point let them ſpeake which can ſpeake by experience, and experience hath taught, not long ſithence, the greater number of houſekeepers, that the higher the prices of corne doe riſe, the lower the ſtates of families fall. And the ſellers of victuals do the more fill their purſes with mony, the leſſe the poore ſeruants fill their bellies with meate. Aske the traueller by the 2

way; aske the labourer in the countrie; aske the tradesmen in the towne; aske the common sort, yea almost any sort of inhabitants in the citie, and which of all these will say, or truly may say, it is no burthen to vs that things are no cheaper? A great part of their care is to make prouision for household: a great part of their labour is swallowed vp in prouision: a great part of time is too little for their labour. So that their care is more, their labour greater, their commons shorter, and state much weaker. Many be restrained from doing further good: many be compelled to lessen former familie: many thereby be brought to manifold inconueniences, more than we expresse or thinke of.

*Vse.* 1. Reproofe of all that affect such a mischiefe, liuing in hope, for their owne priuate lucre, that so great an hurt will grow to the publike state of the land: but specially of such as take the way, and vse the meanes to effect this euill, and to draw vpon it such a iudgement. And of this sort are they which practise that which is here declared to be a noisome sinne, namely to store vp their corne that no man shall haue any benefit by it, whiles there is any good substance in it. They are much more kinde hearted to Rats, and Mice, and Wesils, than they are to their brethren: for they shall haue all freely giuen them for nothing, and men cannot buy any of it for their mony. And therefore what can they say for themselues why they should not be as much liable to the woe and curse which S. *Iames* doth denounce, as those whose other riches were corrupt: whose garments were moath-eaten for want of wearing: whose gold and siluer was canckred and rustie for want of vsage? But worse are they which not onely hoord vp their owne corne, that it shall neuer come foorth seasonably to preuent a dearth: but ingrosse other mens also for the same purpose, that they may make their gaine thereof to the detriment and hurt of many others. But of all others, worst are they which not onely keepe back corne from the market, but from the barne: not from sale, but from sowing: which refuse to yeeld tillage and seed to the ground: which yet further, by force or fraud, extort the ground from other men that they shall neither till nor sow it. These drie vp the springs of the Market, that the streames of plentie should be restrained from flowing to it: these bring a curse

curse vpon the earth, and make it barren in comparison of the store it was wont to yeeld. These labour for depopulation of houses, and townes, and fields, and people. Isai.5.9.10.

Consolation to them that bring an vpright heart to selling, though they cannot be so large in giuing: therein they doe a seruice to God; therein they performe a worke of loue to their neighbours: and therefore they shall be better satisfied at Gods hand than at the buyers: and his pay will be better in grace and goodnes, than the other can be in gold and siluer. 2

*The people will curse him*, &c. It is a grieuous plague to be pursued iustly with the cries and clamours of the people. True it is that *Ieremy* and others of the most faithfull seruants of God haue been spoken euill of, and cursed by the multitude. And so it is true that *as the sparrow by flying, and the swallow by flying escape, so the curse that is causelesse shall not come.* And it is most true, they whom men reuile and persecute, and say all manner of euill for Christ his sake falsely, are blessed. But this is also very true, that to be spoken against for sins sake, truly, is not a matter of blessednes, but miserie: the wings of a mans name & reputation will be clipt so short that it shall not auoide the stroke and shot of a curse, if it be dulie caused. In this same manner are hurtfull men threatned, which flatter, or countenãce, or beare out wicked persons in their sinfull courses. *He that saith to the wicked, thou art righteous, him shall the people curse, and the multitude shall abhorre him.* Pro.24.24. *Doct.* 2. Ier.15.10. Prou.26.2.

First, if a good name be a thing most desireable, and a treasure to be preferred before gold and siluer, and other precious commodities, then it must needes be that an euill name, and infamie is a thing very loathsome, and worse then the losse of any earthly thing, yea then very needines and beggerie. *Reasons.* 1.

Secondly, they which by their owne desert haue stirred vp complaints against themselues, are not onely smitten with the breath of mans mouth, but with the stroake of Gods hand. Hee purposeth it in his counsell: he threatneth it in his word: hee effecteth it in his prouidence: he hearkeneth thereunto, in pitie to them that be oppressed: and in anger, against them that are oppressors. Neither is this the case of violent men alone, and such as heare euill for hard dealing, but of all sorts of sinners which 2

blemiſh themſelues with any kinde of misbehauiour.

*Vſe.* Reprehenſion of impudent perſons which haue hardned their faces, that they cannot bluſh, or bee aſhamed, nor deſiſt from their ſhamefull miſdemeaners, howſoeuer they are thought of, or ſpeake againſt. If they bee exhorted to any good dutie which carrieth no credit among ſuch as are carnall, or diſſwaded from any euill cuſtome which carrieth no diſgrace among them that are ſinfull, their preſent anſwere is, What will men ſay? But let them heare that their pride, or vnthriftines, or couetouſneſſe, or vnconſtancie, or faithleſneſſe in couenants, &c. is much cenſured, many take great exceptions againſt them, they ſhift their hands and goe quite on the other ſide: Say all what they will, I care not for it: better men then I haue been ſpoken againſt, Chriſt himſelfe had ſcarſe a good word of the moſt. But the queſtion is not how good men haue been dealt with, but how they deſerued to be dealt with. True it is and we confeſſe it, that many refuſed to ſpeake good words of Chriſt; but did Chriſt euer prouoke them to it, by euill deedes to them? But words (ſay they) are winde, and reports a wonder for nine daies. But their crimes, ſay we, are more then winde, and their guiltines will not be blowne away in nine thouſand yeeres. That which men ſpeake truely againſt them, God will charge more fully vpon them at the laſt day: and his wordes will be as fire, and his ſentence will not vaniſh away at all, but continue to their ſhame and torment for euer.

Verſe 27. *He that diligently ſeeketh good, ſhall get fauour: but he that ſeeketh euill, it ſhall come to him.*

*Doct.* HE that ſeeketh carefully with an vpright heart to benefit thoſe among whom he liueth, in any good manner, taketh the beſt way to win the hearts of the people: and is like to haue the hearts of good men knit vnto him, and certaine to obtaine and inioy Gods fauour and louing kindneſſe. And he that plotteth, or practiſeth miſchiefe againſt others, of all others ſhall be moſt hurt thereby himſelfe.

He that would bee well thought of, muſt not onely wiſh well but indeuour to do good to his brethren. To beare good affection

to

to mankind, but eſpecially to Gods Church and people is a thing pleaſing to God, and godly men; but men ſee not the affection to be good, further then it is manifeſted by effects: and God ſeeth that affection not to be good, which is voide of a working vigour and fruitfulnes. By what ſteps did *Nehemia* aſcend to that eſtimation which is had of him, in the Church in the Scriptures, and in Gods owne preſence now in heauen? He inquired of the ſtate of his brethren, he mourned for them, he faſted for them, he prayed to God for them, he ſpake to the King for them, he vndertooke a iourney for them, he was indaungered, he was reproched, he was traduced and all for their ſakes. And therfore it an was effectuall petition which hee offered to God: *Remember me O my God in goodnes, according to all that I haue done for this people.* How came *Oneſiphorus* to be ſo deere to *Paul*, and ſo much beloued of God himſelfe, who hath regiſtred his name in an euerlaſting record, euen in his owne holy ſcriptures? by ſhewing himſelfe kind, and bold, and bountifull to the Apoſtle. He did not onely deſire that *Paul* might doe well, but tooke the paines to come to Rome, and there alſo viſited him in the priſon, and ſo prouided that by his meanes, he might doe the better. Nehem. 5. 19. 2. Tim. 1. 16.

*Reaſons.* 1. Firſt it is the nature of loue, to expreſſe it ſelfe by teſtimonies of beneficence and goodnes. For it is not a loue in trueth if it bee not in deede, aſwell as in word and tongue. 1 Ioh. 3. 18.

2. Secondly, there is no ſincerity where is no exerciſe of weldoing, and therefore it will do no more good to our ſelues to thinke, or ſay we deſire well to them whom we ſet our ſelues no way to doe good vnto, then it doth to an hungrie perſon to bid him eate, and giue him no meate, or to one that is cold, to wiſh him warmth, and miniſter to him neither fire nor clothing. Iam. 2. 15.

*Vſe.* Reproofe of them that take a contrarie courſe to get loue and good liking. As for Gods fauour they either count it to be ſo little worth, as they regard it not at all, but thinke the leaſt well doing too great a price for it; or elſe to be ſo common and ordinarie, as that it will be found without ſeeking: or els ſuch an excellencie to be in themſelues, as that God cannot but take delight in them, howſoeuer he be diſpoſed towards others. And for mens affections and good opinion, they hope to come by them by eaſier meanes:

meanes: and that is by making themselues popular in practise of some plausible sins, in yeelding libertie for all licentious courses to them that liue vnder them, in procuring impunity to disordered persons. So that whereas God in his word here saith, hee that seeketh good shall get fauour, they in their deedes say, hee shall get fauour that exerciseth euill.

For the other part of this verse, looke the seuenteenth verse.

Verse 28. *He that trusteth in his riches, shall fall: but the righteous shall florish as a branch.*

HE that so reposeth vpon his wealth, as that for loue and desire thereof, hee is willing, and in confidence thereof hee is bold to sinne against God; hee which hopeth it will keepe him from troubles, or rid him out of troubles, or any way conferre happinesse to him, this man shall surely bee brought downe, and fall into mischiefe. And so by the same proportion, shall all those which trust to men, or to wit, or to any other creature. On the other side, iust men are all on the mending hand; they are well planted, they grow in a fruitfull ground by the riuers of water, they haue the Lord Iesus Christ for their roote, they haue God the Father to dresse and keepe them, and therefore they shall flourish as a branch which groweth and hath greene leaues. The drought of aduersitie shall not hurt them, the dewes of wholesome prosperitie shall not faile them. They shall haue safetie for their bodies, graces for their soules, competencie for their state, and all good furtherances for their euerlasting glorie. Thus standeth the opposition. The wicked trust in their riches, and they shall fall like rotten boughes: but the righteous trust in the Lord, and they shall grow like flourishing branches.

*Doct.* Though the stayes of many wicked men seeme to be the stronger, yet the states of all godly men proue to be the surer.

If safetie consisted in wealth, and happinesse in height, wee could not but yeeld that diuers sinfull persons were grounded in great safety and happinesse: for they haue the world at will, & are mounted vp to eminent places. And if perill did alwayes accompanie

panie pouertie, and miſeric likewiſe a meane condition, who could denie, but that the moſt of the beſt men, ſhould euer bee found in the worſt caſe, and of all others the moſt miſerable? for that they are commonly poore and baſe in the world? But if God in his iuſt iudgements doe lift vp his enemies hie, to caſt them downe the; lower and if his ſeruants take rooting low, that they may grow vp the hier then let the wicked take heede of a downe-fall, and then let the righteous not doubt of a riſing. The thirtie ſeuen and ſeuentie third Pſalmes, are treatiſes wholy vpon this argument, beſides many other texts of Scripture. And this commeth to paſſe to both ſides. Firſt, in regard of the different, and contrarie choiſe which they haue made of helpers to themſelues. *Reaſons.* 1. What doe ſinfull perſons and wicked men take to bee their ſtaues to leane vpon, and that with their whole weight? Euen fleſhly ſupports, as goods and riches which are ſlender reedes, that will breake, and run into their hands and ſhoulders, and lay them flat on the ground. Theſe they build vpon as a foundation moſt firme and ſtable, theſe they depend vpon as friends moſt ſure and faithfull: theſe they truſt vnto as holds moſt ſtrong and mightie. And yet is there any thing more vncertaine, more deceitfull, more weake and feeble then theſe are? They bee fugitiue and away they goe, when they ſhould ſticke to a man: they be falſe and performe nothing that they promiſe. They ſay, giue vs your heart, eſpecially when we increaſe, we haue power to doe you all good. But *Dauid* ſaith, *If riches increaſe, ſet not your heart theron God ſpake once, twice haue I heard it, that power belongeth only to God.* Pſal.62.10.11. There was neuer any Papiſt, or heathē man more deceiued in dumbe Idols, then worldlings be in the hope of their monie and ſubſtance. The images haue as much ſenſe to heare, and ſpeake, and deale for them which pray to them, as gold and ſiluer and other treaſures haue ability in themſelues to helpe them, that make them their gods: and many more are illuded by theſe, then by the others. And whom doe the godly make their refuge? In whom is their hope fixed? in God omnipotent, eternall, endles in mercie, wiſedome, and trueth, whoſe good prouidence doth neuer faile them in life: whoſe gracious fauour doth not forſake them at death: And that one word may comprehend all, and

that is infinitely much, and more then heauen and earth can comprehend, he is God euery way for them, al-sufficient.

2 Secondly, in regard of their behauiour towards the Lord. The wicked commit an execrable sacriledge & spirituall treason, they cast off that loyaltie that is due only to him, & yeeld it to the abiect and contemptible creatures: for so may they be called when they are matched as equals, or preferred as superiours to their Creator. And this is done in all vaine confidence, as it was spoken of trust to flesh & bloud, so to all of that kind: *Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arme, and withdraweth his heart from the Lord.* Confidence is a prerogatiue and royaltie, that the Lord neuer communicateth to any, vpon any conditions. He so calleth for loue to himselfe, that men also should bee loued for his sake, and feared and reioyced at, and the like is in other affections: but to trust in any besides him, is as much as in vs is, to set the imperiall diadem of heauen and earth vpon their heads. Now the godly relying altogether vpon his fidelitie and power yeeld him homage, and declare themselues to be his loyall, faithfull, and obedient subiects, and performe a most acceptable seruice vnto him.

Ieremi.17.5.

*Vse.* 1. Instruction, to be so much more industrious for righteousnes, than riches, by how much it is better to bee a liuing tree, than a dead stocke: and to stand fast in the state of all good happinesse, than to fall into sinne, and shame, and miserie, and destruction. So much goodnes as any man hath, so much he hath of faith, so farre he sheweth the sappe and vertue of his roote: so certaine and assured he may be of perpetuall firmnesse and stabilitie. And looke what measure of vaine confidence is in euery one, so much sinfulnes is in him (and therefore the contrarietie is set betweene such as trust in their riches, and the righteous; because hee that hath affiance in his wealth, must needes bee euill, and hee that is righteous must needes trust in God) and so sure it is that Gods strokes and iudgements will pursue him, and to his owne inabilitie of standing, he shall haue this added, that God will push at him, and cast him downe.

2 Terror for couetous Idolaters, which make their goods their gods, and their greedie getting their deuotion, and their plentie

their

their ſafetie, and their paſtures, fields, barnes, ſhops, warehouſes, or coffers, their heauen. Like fooliſh men, *they waite vpon lying vanities, and forſake their owne mercie.* It is as eaſie for a croppe of corne to thriue vpon a waſte Heath, or in the middeſt of a thornie hedge, or thicket of buſhes, as it is for grace to grow in their hearts: and it is as eaſie *for a cable rope to goe through an needles eye, as for them to enter into the kingdome of heauen.* And yet they think al to be well, and their ſtate to be happie: yea they preſume ſo farre of their owne ſtanding, that vpon confidence of their power they doubt not but to giue others the fall: they hope that their withered rotten ſtickes ſhall be able to roote vp and throw downe the ſtrongeſt Cedars that grow in the Church of God. Such a one was *Doeg*, that thought to doe great things againſt *Danid*, but *Danid* did after a ſort defie him, and bad him doe his worſt, yea he derided, and told him that the worſt would bee his owne: *Why boaſteſt thou* (ſaith he) *in thy wickedneſſe, O man of power? the louing kindneſſe of God endureth daily. God ſhall deſtroy thee for euer: he ſhall take thee and plucke thee out of thy tabernacle, and roote thee out of the land of the liuing. The righteous alſo ſhall ſee it, and feare, and ſhall laugh at him, ſaying, Behold the man that tooke not God for his ſtrength, but truſted to the multitude of his riches. But I ſhall be like a greene Oliue tree in the houſe of God: for I truſted in the mercie of God for euer and euer.* Ionah 2.8. Mark.10.24. 25. Pſal.52.1.5.6. &c.

Conſolation, to godly men that haue receiued to their owne hearts, and giuen to other men, a teſtimonie of faith and righteouſnes: no enemie without or corrections within ſhall depriue them of their comfort, or of any good bleſſing that concerneth this preſent life, or their euerlaſting ſaluation. 3

Verſ.29. *He that troubleth his owne houſe ſhall inherite the wind, and the foole ſhall be ſeruant to the wiſe in heart.*

HE is ſaid to trouble his houſe, which doth miſpend his goods, and miſguide his affaires, and miſgouerneth his people that dwell with him. That either doth corrupt them with ſinfulnes, or moleſt them with frowardnes, or afflict them with miſerie. When he either maketh them patients to beare the bur-

then of his follie, or agents to commit follie with him. He ſhall inherite the winde, that is, ſhall bring al to nothing. His ſubſtance ſhal flie vp like ſmoake into the aire, and nothing be left to maintaine him on earth. And when all his goods are gone, his libertie muſt goe after. This foole ſhall be ſeruant to the wiſe in heart, that is, to one who is more prouident, diſcreete and carefull for his ſtate and houſehold. They were wont in great wants to ſell themſelues for ſeruants, as the Egyptians did in *Ioſephs* time. And for great debts to bee taken by the creditours, and either made their bondmen, or elſe ſold to others. And one of theſe, ſaith he, is like to be the caſe of this vnthriftie trouble-houſe.

Gen.47.19.

Matth.18.25.

*Doct.* He that would not vndoe himſelfe, let him not diſorder his familie and domeſticall affaires. It neerely concerneth an houſeholder to know, that his houſe is laden with his whole eſtate, that his people ſaile together with him in the ſame veſſell, for his vſe. And if he will neither play the good Pilot himſelfe in his owne place, nor ſuffer them to be good Mariners in theirs, how ſoone ſhall he runne his barke vpon the Rockes? how quickly ſhall hee make ſhipwracke of all that he hath?

*Reaſons.* 1 Firſt, he takes the way to bring a curſe vpon all, by due deſert. The Lord hath made him a ſteward, and in diuers reſpects committed a truſt vnto him, which hee doth vnfaithfully diſcharge. He hath put his goods into his hands, to be orderly diſpoſed of, as may be moſt for his glorie; and thoſe he expendeth vpon his owne luſts, and to Gods diſhonour: and is it not iuſt then that they ſhould be taken from him? He hath made him an ouerſeer of the perſons that liue vnder him, that he ſhould be an example and guide vnto them in all vertuous behauiour, and he groweth to be a diſſolute Maſter of Miſrule; is it not equall that another ſhould take his place of ſuperiority, & he be made an vnderling?

2 Secondly, either his houſehold is diſcouraged from diligence by his crooked peruerſenes, or elſe withdrawne from faithfulnes by learning to be ſinfull, and both of theſe tend one way, namely, to the ouerthrow of his eſtate.

*Vſe.* 1. Admonition to bee good gouernours of our families, and good husbands for our eſtates, not onely in conſcience to obey God for our euerlaſting ſaluation, but in Chriſtian prouidence for

for our preſent condition; if not to get, yet to ſaue, as to preſerue our goods, ſo to retaine our freedome. For albeit that villenage and bondage be not now in vſe among vs, yet impriſonment is not altogether out of vſe. And euery one is ſo farre in ſeruitude, and in the creditours power, as hee wanteth abilitie to pay his debts. He may well be ſaid to be another mans ſeruant, whoſe ſtate and libertie doth ſtand at another mans curteſie.

2 Terror for them that giue ouer themſelues to ſuch ſinnes as be not onely troubleſome, but trouble it ſelfe to their houſes. Thoſe wee meane which cauſe the Gouernours to lay burthens vpon their inferiours, and God to lay iudgements vpon the Gouernours. Wee will not make mention of many, nor inſiſt long vpon them which wee mention. Pride muſt haue the firſt place, becauſe it is predominant and carrieth a great ſway among the reſt. From it groweth contempt, and diſdaine, contentions, railings, and all manner of imperious inſolencie. And for recompence thereof, and of all the curſed effects which it produceth againſt God and man, the Lord threatneth to *deſtroy the houſe of proud men.* Whoredome and incontinencie alſo worke much miſchiefe to families, and moſt of all to the heads themſelues. The holy Ghoſt in this booke, is very frequent in this point. As, *the ſtranger ſhall be filled with thy ſtrength, and thy labours ſhall be in the houſe of a ſtranger.* And, *becauſe of the whoriſh woman a man is brought to a morſell of bread.* And *Iob* ſaith, that if hee ſhould that way haue defiled himſelfe, it would haue *bin a fire deuouring to deſtruction,* & which would haue *rooted out all his increaſe.* Gaming, riot, and vnthriftines ſo apparantly ſhew themſelues in this ranke, that it ſhall be needleſſe to diſcourſe of them. Onely Couetouſnes we will conclude with, which ſeemeth to be an help to raiſe vp an houſe, and yet vndermineth the very foundations of it. This maketh men fierce, and violent, bitter and crueli, like Beares and Lions among their people. And this the Lord himſelfe hath reckoned for one of theſe turbulent ſinnes, and ſo would haue vs to account of it. *He that is greedie of gaine troubleth his owne houſe: but he that hateth gifts, ſhall liue.* As if he ſhould ſay, If men be not wearie of this wretched greedines, it will make them in all corrupt manner, to purſue their commo-

Prou.15.25.

Prou.5.10.

Prou.6.26.

Iob 31.12.

Prou.15.27.

dities, to the annoyance of theirs, till Gods wrath purſue them to death and vndoing.

And whereas many proud perſons, and vncleane, and couetous, hold vp their heads ſtill, and decay not in ſtate, they come not into other mens dangers, but haue many others fallen into their hands; yet let not men thinke there is a poſſibilitie of impunitie, becauſe they are not ſcourged with the leaſt rod, but reſerued to a greater: for pouertie is one of the eaſieſt puniſhments. What though they come not to inherit the wind here? yet if they inherit damnation in the world to come, what gaine they by the change? what though they bee not brought to bee ſeruants to men? yet if they bee ſeruants to ſinne, preſently, and ſhall receiue the wages of ſinne hereafter, how much is their caſe the better?

Verſe 30. *The fruit of the righteous is as a tree of life, and hee that winneth ſoules is wiſe.*

THe meaning of theſe words is, that a godly man is very plentifull in bringing forth fruit, and his fruite exceeding profitable to them that receiue it. Eſpecially his inſtructions, conſolations, prayers, & other ſpirituall meanes that he vſeth, to conuert, or confirme the hearts of his brethren. And he himſelf alſo is not without the fruit of his owne fruit, which is intimated here by pronouncing him wiſe that winneth ſoules, that is, which with deſire, and indeuour faithfully and diſcreetly, by Gods owne meanes, according to his place and calling either doth draw men out of their ſinnes and ignorance, or elſe faileth of ſucceſſe therein, not by his negligence, and want of loue, but rather by their ſtubborneſſe and want of will. And herewith the Prophet doth ſatiſfie himſelfe, whatſoeuer ſhould bee the iſſue of his miniſterie.

Iai 49.4. *Now ſaith the Lord that formed me from the wombe to bee his ſeruant, that I may bring Iacob againe to him, though Iſrael be not gathered, yet ſhall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord: and my God ſhall be my ſtrength.* On the other ſide wee dare not take vpon vs to iuſtifie the hearts and ſtates of all thoſe which haue been occaſions of any mans conuerſion, if it bee not their fruite: nor to extenuate the

the efficacie of euery vnregenerate mans miniſterie, that his doctrine ſhould winne none to ſaluation. It is graunted without queſtion, or gainesaying, that he may prepare before, and build vp after, and we remember not any ſuch ſtint or reſtraint ſpoken of, but that he may alſo cõuert, eſpecially before his life is ſtained with any ſinfull behauiour, that might bring his miniſterie into contempt. The power of preaching ſtandeth in the ordinance of God, by the worke of his ſpirit, and not in the perſon of the meſſenger, that doth publiſh it.

Of all people, none doe ſo much good as the godly. Looke how farre the tree of life, which was the beſt in paradiſe, excelled all the brambles and briers which are the worſt on the wild waſt, ſo farre doe ſuch as feare God ſurmount the godleſſe in goodnes. In the firſt Pſalme, religious men which giue themſelues to the exerciſe of pietie are compared to trees, that yeeld the moſt, and beſt, and ripeſt fruite; and ſinful men which giue themſelues to the practiſe of vanity are likened to chaffe, or rather the duſt of chaffe, which is good for nothing. In the ſecond of the Canticles the godly are reſembled to the moſt beautifull and pleaſant lilies which yeeld delight to thoſe that gather them; and the wicked to thornes or thiſtles which doe annoy thoſe that meddle with them. In other places of ſcripture the ſeruants of God are called ſheepe; which for lambe, and fleece, and fleſh, and euery other way, are commodious, inſomuch that they make the very ground the better which they ſit vpon; and the ſlaues of ſinne are called by the names of Wolues, and Foxes, and ſuch kinde of beaſts, which are very hurtfull, and be readie to doe miſchiefe whereſoeuer they come. In what reſpect the fruite of the righteous is ſo profitable, it will appeare by the proportion it hath with the tree of life whereunto it is compared. *Doct.* Pſal. 1. 3. Cant. 2. 3.

First in regard of the cauſe, it is ſaid that it groweth by the riuer of life, whoſe waters feede the roote thereof, and the roote ſendeth vp the ſap, and the ſap ſendeth out the fruite. And ſo the good which a good man doth, ariſeth not from his wit, nor naturall diſpoſition, nor fleſhly wiſedome, but ſpringeth from the word, and ſpirit of God in his heart, Gal. 5. 22. *Reaſons.* 1. Reue. 22. 22.

Secondly, as touching the manner thereof it is ſaid that it is 2

continually

continually bearing without ſtay, or failing, not once a yeere, but once in a moneth, not in ſommer only, but in winter alſo, and euery time new kinds of fruit, and not of one ſort alone (as it falleth out commonly with other trees, for in them the ſame branch
Ezech.47.12. neuer varieth the kind) and that rotteth not, nor droppeth downe with ripeneſſe. In like ſort doth the ſpirit of grace make Gods children conſtant in well doing, and that alſo in performance of many dueties, according to the varietie of occaſions and oppor-
1.Pet.1.5.6. tunities offered. *They ioyne vertue with their faith: and with vertue knowledge: and with knowledge temperance: and with temperance patience: and with patience godlines: and with godlines brotherlie*
Mat.25.35.36 *kindnes: and with brotherly kindnes loue. If they ſee the members of Chriſt hungrie, they giue them meate; if thirſtie, they giue them drinke: if naked, they clothe them: if they bee ſtrangers, they lodge them: if they be ſicke, they viſite them: if they be in priſon, they come vnto them, &c.*

3 Thirdly for the effect, the tree of life was for meate, and the leaues for medicine, and both for life: and no leſſe vertue proceedeth from righteous perſons, *their lippes doe feede many: their*
Prou.10.21. *tongues are wholeſome, their inſtructions are as a welſpring of life, to turne away from the ſnares of death.* Pro.13.14.

*Vſe.* 1. Admonition for euery one to ſearch his wayes, and to trie his ſtate by this rule. If thou be a fruitefull tree, thou art a righteous man: if thou be giuen to ſhew mercie, thou canſt not be vnfruitfull; if thy labour bee to kill ſinne, and to helpe mens ſoules to euerlaſting life, then who can denie thee to bee truely mercifull? In this caſe though the diuell come roaring with grieuous accuſations; though he would perſwade thee, that thou art an hypocrite; and they would perſwade others, that thou art an arrogant proud perſon; yet be not diſmaied at the matter. Satan ſaith, that thou beareſt a diſſembling heart; but God ſeeth that thou liueſt a ſincere life. They impute thy ſpeeches, and other behauiour, to pride and vaine glorie: but thine owne ſoule knoweth that they proceede from loue and vnfained faithfulneſſe. And let this be ſpoken for thy comfort, that ſhall neuer faile thee, that thoſe which are trees of life to men, are trees of delight to God himſelfe; and he is nothing leſſe pleaſed with them, than his people

are

are benefited by them. And so the Apostle saith, they please God in all things, *which are fruitfull in all good workes.* And so doth Christ speake of his Church, and the members thereof in *Salomons* songs: *My sister, my spouse, is as a garden inclosed. Thy plants are as an orchard of Pomegranets, with sweete fruits, as Camphire, Spikenard, and Saffron, Calamus, and Cinamon, with all trees of Incense, Myrrhe, and Aloes, with all the chiefe spices.* But if thou bee fruitlesse, thou art voide of righteousnes, and so destitute of Gods favour, and thine owne safetie. For vnfruitfull trees hath God marked out to be hewen down for fire wood. But worse are they, by farre, and in more dangerous case, that bring foorth too much fruite, but it is of the flesh, and to the flesh, works of pride, works of crueltie, cursed blasphemie and swearing, notorious riot, and vnthriftines, drunkennes, filthines, contempt of Magistrates, contempt of Ministers, contempt of preaching, and malice against all godly Christians. *Their vine is the vine of Sodom, and of the vines of Gomorah: their grapes are grapes of gall, their clusters be bitter. Their wine is the poison of dragons, and the cruell gall of aspes.*

Col.1.10. Cant.4.12. 13.14. Matth.3.10. Deut.32.32. 33.

Reproofe of them that make lesse account of these trees of life, than of a thornie hedge, than of nettles, than of most vnsauourie weedes, than of plants that bring foorth deadly poison. They distaste no men so much as good men, and the better they are, the worse they like them. *Ieremy* came and offered his fruit to a people that stood in great neede to eate of the tree of life: for they were readie to perish with death. But they practised to abolish that fruit which was offered for their preseruation, and to take away his life, which sought to saue theirs. For so hath the Lord declared their conspiracie: *Let vs destroy the tree with the fruit thereof, and cut him out of the land of the liuing, that his name may be no more in memorie.* Which almost of all the Prophets sped better? How much more fauourably was *Paul* dealt with? And especially Christ Iesus, the very tree of life, and Lord of life, and life it selfe, whom all the rest did but resemble? His perfect fruit they trampled on, & laboured to dig him vp by the roote. And so they dealt still with his messengers and seruants, not making vse of their companie, but abhorring it: not desiring to be partakers of

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Ierem.11.19.

their knowledge, and wisedome, and other graces, but to suppresse them.

*Doct.* 2. *He that winneth soules is wise, &c.* It is the note of a wise man, to shew mercie to mens soules. Fooles cannot easily finde out the maladie of sinne; fooles faile of all experience of good medicines that may cure a sinfull heart; fooles feele not the burthen of their owne iniquities, and therefore cannot be compassionate towards others for theirs. Only wisedome doth shew the disease, and the remedie, and moueth mens hearts in pitie to helpe them that are infected with it. That which *Salomon* professeth to bee true of himselfe, is also verified of euery good man in his measure; *The more wise Ecclesiastes was, the more he taught the people knowledge.* And to conuert it the other way: the more any man teacheth the people knowledge, the more wise he is. Eccle. 12. 9.

*Reasons.* 1. First, he performeth an acceptable seruice to God, which no foole can euer doe. He is a diligent and profitable husbandman for seeding, weeding, and harueſt worke. He is a valiant and skilfull souldier to discomfit Satan his strongest enemie; to winne his holds from him, and to rescue his spoyle and captiues out of his hand. Yea not onely to set his prisoners at libertie, but to winne away the hearts of his owne souldiers; that they shal both forsake him, and set themselues in battell against him.

2 Secondly, he is very prouident for his owne good, and prepareth a blessed reward for himselfe, against the appearance of Iesus Christ. And of such men, and of that state, speaketh the Prophet Daniel: *They that make men wise shall shine as the brightnes of the firmament: and they that turne many to righteousnes, shall shine as the starres, for euer and euer.* Dan. 12. 3.

*Vse.* 1. Incouragement, to gaine mens soules to God, and saluation to mens soules, though we should lose that liking and fauour which was wont to be shewed to our selues. What though wee be tearmed busie fooles for our labour? doth not God cleere vs, and say that we are wise men, and well exercised? What though wee bee censured for sillie creatures, that make our friends to be our foes? doth not God commend vs for our good prouidence in making him to be our friend? What though wee draw vpon our selues, contempt, displeasure, and persecution from wicked persons for the present? doth not God tell vs that wee shall obtaine glorie, and

and fauour, and peace at his hands for euermore hereafter? The godly esteeme vs to be wise; the holy Scriptures pronounce vs to be wise; our reward in time will shew vs to be wise: and shall the reproch of foolish men discourage vs from our wisedome?

Terror for them that corrupt mens soules, and labour with all their might to keepe men from comming to God. It is a blessed calling to be a fisher for God, as *Peter* was, and to catch men with the net of the word: but of all trades it is the worst to fish for Satans turne, and to kill men with the baites of sinne. Therefore is the case of the diuell the most miserable of all creatures, because he hath done more mischiefe this way than all the rest. And that causeth the Lord so grieuously to threaten the false Prophets that kept men from repentance: and the false Apostles that hindred the worke of the Gospell; and *Elymas*, and any that haue sought to peruert mens hearts, or behauiour. It is not safe to depraue the Ministerie, to weaken the power of it. It is not safe to intice men to Poperie and superstition. It is not safe to perswade men to prophaneneſſe and neglect of Gods worship. If the naturall Serpent being but a beast was so plagued for being an instrument of Satan vnknowingly, and without desire to bring the woman into sinne; what shall become of them that applie their wit, and tongue, and heart, and whatsoeuer they can, to doe him seruice herein?

Verse 31. *Behold, the righteous shall be recompensed on earth: how much more the wicked and the sinner?*

THe matter which he is about to speake of, is both certaine and weightie, and such as concerneth euery man to looke to in regard of his owne case; and therefore he prefixeth this word, *Behold*, to moue all to a serious consideration of that which is to be said. And that is first touching the godly, that they must bee corrected for their faults, when they offend, euen in such manner and measure as holdeth some proportion with their offences, though not in equalitie, for then who should be able to abide it? The word *recompense* therefore in this place is not taken for reuengement, or punishment proceeding from Gods indignation,

but a louing chaſtiſement, though it be ſharper according to the threatning of parents to their children, whom they be farre from hating, or hurting: I will ſurely pay you for this. And that it ſhould appeare that nothing is intended againſt them for the perill of their euerlaſting ſtate, there is a limitation annexed, that it is to be only in the earth. Next he ſheweth the condition of the wicked, that if the righteous ſcape not ſcotfree, they muſt in no ſort be ſpared, but feele more heauie and fearefull puniſhments, though not in the earth, yet in the world to come.

*Doct.* The beſt muſt looke for ſtripes, if they will take libertie to ſin againſt God. True it is that the Lord taketh not aduantage of infirmities, he paſſeth by them, he winketh at them, he ſmiteth not his children for them: but when they grow too bold, he wil nurture and awe them with correction. In this ſenſe he may be ſaid to be no reſpecter of perſons, that as he will not endure the ſinfulnes of the wicked, though they be neuer ſo great: ſo hee will not allow of the ſinnes of the godly, though they bee neuer ſo good. The vertues that men haue, doe not warrant them to fall into any vice: their religion and graces doe not priuiledge them to doe thoſe things which are vnſeemly for religious and gracious perſons to practiſe. Few points are more fully confirmed by manifeſt proofes than this. The Scriptures propoſe many examples, our eares haue heard many reports, our eyes doe daily behold many preſidents for this purpoſe, and they that will not be perſwaded by theſe, ſhall finde it true by experience in themſelues. What dolefull complaints doth the Church make euery where in the Lamentations of Ieremy? *Behold, O Lord, how I am*
Lam.1.18.20. *troubled: my bowels ſwell: mine heart is turned within me, for I am full of heauineſſe: the Lords ſword ſpoyleth abroad, as death doth at home. The Lord is righteous: for I haue rebelled againſt his commandement.* How lamentably do the godly bemone themſelues, and the ſtate of the Church, in the prophecie of Eſaiah? *Be not*
Iſai.64.9.10. *angrie, O Lord, aboue meaſure, neither remember iniquitie for euer: loe, we beſeech thee behold, we are all thy people. Thine holy cities lie waſte: Zion is a wildernes, and Ieruſalem a deſert. The houſe of our ſanctuarie, and of our glorie, where our fathers praiſed thee, is burnt vp with fire, and all our pleaſant things are waſted.* In what patheticall

call manner doth the Prophet expresse the burden of his afflictions, in the booke of the Psalmes? *Thine arrowes haue light vpon me, and thine hand lieth vpon me. There is nothing sound in my flesh, because of thine anger: neither is there rest in my bones, because of my sinne.* Psal. 38.2.3.

First, God herein respecteth his owne glorie, who will haue his people to know, that he doth looke for seruice at their hands. If they performe it willingly they shall not faile to be rewarded for it: but if they grow carelesse and negligent to obey him, they shall be driuen vnto it by compulsion. This was that which made both *Moses* and *Ieremie* bestirre them, when God shewed his anger to the one, and threatned to destroy the other, for being so backward to vndertake their ministerie: Exo. 4.14. Ier. 1.17. And the wicked shall see by this, that hee is neither remisse toward all, nor partiall to any, when his commandement is not regarded. This seemeth to be one cause, why the Prophet that came to Bethel, and failed to fulfill that which was giuen him in charge, was so seuerely handled. He told *Ieroboam*, that God had straightlie forbidden him either to eate or to drinke in that citie, and yet *Ieroboam* might heare that he had both eaten and drunken in the house of an other Prophet there, for which cause the Lord sent a Lion to kil him, that it might be knowne to *Ieroboam* and others, how dangerous it was for any to disobey his word. *Reasons.* 1. 1. Reg. 13.

Secondly, he respecteth their good, though it might seeme to be better for them if they were wholy freed from all manner of troubles and crosses. How wanton, how froward, how stubborne would children be? Into what perils would they cast themselues, if they should be altogether exempted from the rod? They could neuer feele the comfort of their parents fauour, vnlesse they sometimes found the smart of their displeasure. And so are the stripes and chastisements of God as needfull euery way to all his sonnes and daughters. They make vs the more carefull to beware of euill: they helpe vs to repentance when wee haue fallen into euill: they confirme the loue of our heauenly father toward s vs; they be occasions of his holinesse in vs: They bring the quie t fruite of righteousnes vnto vs. Finally, to knit vp all in few words: we are therefore recompenced with afflictions in the earth, that we should not be punished with destruction in hell, but rewarded Heb. 12.6.10. 11.

with euerlasting glorie in heauen. And this the Apostle sheweth to be the cause why God scourgeth vs. *When wee are iudged*, saith
1.Cor.11.32. he, *we are chastned of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.*

*Vse.* 1. Admonition to euery one that feareth God, to looke well to his heart and wayes, that he retaine the feare of God constantly, and not be venturous to doe any thing that may offend him. The Lord hateth sinne as well in the godly as in the wicked, and will sooner smite the godly for his sinne, then the wicked, though not so grieuously. An example hereof was alreadie shewne in the Prophet slaine as he was going from Bethel. *Ieroboams* transgressions were begun long before the fault that hee committed, and yet the strooke came vpon him for his fault long before the destruction of *Ieroboam* and his house. And let no man say, I am safe, because I am sure to be saued; he may fall into great miserie in this life, though he be in state of happines for the life to come. Freedome from perdition doth not free men from all manner of punishments. What plague besides destruction can Christians say, we shall certainly escape, vnlesse they bee sure to escape such sinnes as may prouoke God to plague them? The Magistrate hath many punishments for offenders besides death, as the stocks, the goale, the whip, the pillarie, &c. and God hath more iudgements besides damnation, as euery man may heare by the threatnings, and see by the execution, and feele by the burden of them. *Dauid* was as safe from being condemned, as Satan is out of all hope to be redeemed; and yet his calamities made him to groane, and crie, and roare as he saith. His bloud was dried vp, his moi-
Psal.32.4. and 51.8. sture was like the drought of summer. His torment was as great as if his bones had been broken. And as no man should take incouragement by ought that is in himselfe to doe that which is displeasing to the Lord; so is there a care to bee had that wee bee not led by the examples of other men to doe any thing which the word doth not allow. Some here by take libertie for breach of the Sabbath, some for gaming, some for one thing, some for another. Good men, say they, vse these things, and why then may not wee also? But it is no part of their goodnes, say wee, and then why should you follow them therein at all? Their practise leadeth you to the like facts, but can it preserue you or themselues from the reward

ward thereof? The queſtion is not therefore who they bee that do it, but with what warrant, and how well they are like to ſpeede for their doing.

Conſolation in afflictions, that they diſable vs not from being righteous, though they be compenſations of ſinnes for which we are not yet ſufficiently humbled. We ſhall adde to our owne ſorrowes, and needleſſie increaſe the weight of our burdens, if wee condemne our ſtate, becauſe the Lord correcteth vs for our faults: if we relinquiſh our hope of happines in heauen, becauſe we are recompenced with iudgements on earth: it is allotted by God to the beſt of his ſeruants ſo to be dealt with. 2

*How much more, &c.* Euery wicked mans ſtate is worſe then any godly mans can be. Take the moſt proſperous of them all, euen ſuch as the Prophet ſpeaketh of, *that haue not a knot to their death*, but the web of their life from the wombe to the graue, hath runne with euen threed both in warpe and woofe without any breach, and let him be compared with a Chriſtian that neuer ſaw merrie day touching outward things, and he ſhall be found to be a miſerable forlorne caitiffe, in reſpect of this poore ſeruant of God. And indeede the tribulations and afflictions of good men do not bring them behind the wicked, but ſhew that the plagues and puniſhments of the wicked are yet behind. That reaſon our Sauiour vſed to the women that lamented him as an vnfortunate man, and one forſaken of God: *Weepe not for me*, ſaith hee, *but weepe for your ſelues, and your children. For if theſe things be done to a greene tree, what ſhall be done to the drie?* This reaſon the Prophet *Ieremie* vſed to Gentiles bordering vpon Iudah, which thought that plagues had only belonged to the Church. *Loe, I begin to plague the citie, where my name is called vpon, and ſhould you goe free? yee ſhall not goe quite, for I will call for a ſword vpon all the inhabitants of the earth, ſaith the Lord of hoſtes.* *Doct.* Luc. 23. 28. 31. Ierem. 25. 29.

And this reaſon S. *Peter* vſeth againſt all impious and ſinfull perſons: *The time is that iudgement muſt begin at the houſe of God. If it firſt begin at vs, what ſhall the end bee of them that obey not the Goſpell of God? And if the righteous ſcarcely bee ſaued, where ſhall the vngodly and the ſinner appeare?* 1. Pet. 4. 17.

Firſt, the fauour and goodneſſe of the Lord doth correct the one part, and that for their greateſt good and happines: and his wrath *Reaſons.* 1.

wrath and vengeance doth purſue the other, and that for their greateſt hurt and miſerie.

2 Secondly, the death & ſuffrings of Ieſus Chriſt, haue drunke vp the vengeance and curſe of the afflictions of the one part, ſo that now there is nothing in them, but that which is medicinable and wholeſome. And Gods iudgements, with their owne ſinfulnes haue put a ſting into the troubles of the other, ſo that all that is in them is peſtiferous and deadly.

3 Thirdly, for the one part, the Lord knoweth what their ſtrength is, and therefore will lay no more vpon them, then they are well able to beare: and for the other, he knoweth what their waies be, and will preſſe them with as much as they haue deſerued.

4 Fourthly, the one part vndergoe temporarie tribulations here in earth, and all their ſufferings will end with their life: and the other ſhall ſuffer eternall paines in hell, and all their torments ſhall begin at their death.

*Vſe.* Inſtruction not to be diſtempered, or diſcouraged at their inſultations ouer vs in our troubles. They clap their hands and make a ſhout to ſee vs beaten at our fathers hands, or in the ſchoole; let them mocke on, and take their courſe, the officer is at their backe to apprehend them, we ſhall ſee them ſit in the ſtocks: we ſhall ſee them geiued with bolts vpon their heeles: we ſhall ſee them arraigned as malefactors: we ſhall ſee them condemned and executed as traytors againſt the Maieſtie of God. And as there is no cauſe why we ſhould be troubled at their inſolencie, ſo is there no reaſon why we ſhould be moued at their proſperitie. We ſhould make our ſelues more miſerable then we are, if we ſhould like our owne caſe the worſe, becauſe they deride vs: and we ſhould iudge them more happie then they be, if wee ſhould thinke their ſtate the better, becauſe they applaud themſelues. Let vs in compaſſion pitie the particulars, and pray for them, but neuer eſteeme their condition ſo comfortable, as to wiſh it for our ſelues, or to grudge it to them. And becauſe our eyes are much dazeled with externall ſhewes of things preſent, the holy Ghoſt doth giue vs acaueat to take heede of the ſame: *Fret not thy*

Pro. 23. 19. 20. *ſelfe becauſe of the malitious, neither bee enuious at the wicked. For there ſhall be none end of plagues to the euill man: the light of the wicked ſhall be put out.*

AN

# AN EXPOSITION OF THE TWELFTH CHAPTER OF THE PROVERBS.

## CHAPTER XII.

Verse 1. *He that loueth correction, loueth knowledge: but he that hateth correction, is brutish.*

HE *that loueth instruction,* Which doth applie himselfe to seeke it, by those meanes which are ordained of God for his people to be instructed by, and accepteth and maketh vse of it, when it is offered to him, *he loueth knowledge,* that is, hath it in due estimation, and truly desireth it, and therefore shall also accordingly obtaine it. *But he that hateth correction,* which refuseth all instruction, but especially will not indure to be reproued, or corrected, *he is brutish,* a beast in a mans shape, a foole in a high degree of follie, both for an ignorant minde, and rude behauiour, and wretched condition.

Euery mans desire of grace and saluation, may be tried by his affection to the meanes thereof. He that is diligent in seeking is willing to finde, as he that setteth himselfe to make speede in his way, hath a minde to his iournies end. So the Lord speaketh of the godly in one place of *Isaiah,* that they shall say: *Come, let vs goe vp to the mountaine of the house of the Lord, that he may teach* *Doct.* 1. Isai. 2. 3.

*of his wayes, and we may walke in his paths.* And so the godly speake
Isai.26.8.9. to the Lord in another place of Isaiah: *The desire of our soule is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee. With my soule haue I desired thee in the night, and with my spirit within me will I seeke thee in the morning.*

*Reasons.* 1. First, the same spirit that draweth men to liking of the one, doth also worke a loue of the other: for both are wrought by the Holy Ghost.

2 Secondly, all the ordinances of God for mans saluation are contrarie to flesh and blood, and therefore no man can take any delight in them further than hee looketh to the end, and is refreshed with comfortable effects in the way.

3 Thirdly, no man can desire the holy knowledge of God with truth and feruencie, vnlesse he haue had some tatte of the fruit of it, and he that hath tasted of the fruit, hath profited by the means, and he that hath profited by the meanes, will loue them euer afterwards. They that finde the comfort of life, haue formerly felt the benefit of food: and they that are desirous to continue their life, are not vnwilling to receiue their foode: and they that hunger after foode for the continuance of life, haue also an appetite to it in regard of the reliſh.

*Vſe.* 1. Refutation of their boastings, that goe before all in speaking of their desire and forwardnes to please God, and be saued, and come behinde euery one, in shewing any good notes of it. They make their mouthes and not their hearts, the principall seate of their loue: and likewise their words, and not their deedes, their onely arguments doe proue that they doe loue. It is very burdenous for them to liue constantly vnder a faithfull Ministerie. Euerie godly sermon is tedious vnto them: for length, if it bee not ended within the houre: for the manner, if it sauour not of humane wit and eloquence: for the matter, if it be wholesome, and liuely, and come home to the rebuking of any sinne, which they are not minded to forsake. And yet they would haue vs all to know, that none are better friends than they to knowledge. And yet they must giue vs leaue againe to tell them, that euery friend of knowledge is better affected than they are, to instruction.

2 Consolation to them that thinke it no paines to be painfull in labouring

labouring for the bread of life. They feele not, they ſay, the loue of the word of God, the deſire of faith and care of repentance, &c. But from whence proceedeth that? is it not hence, that they are greedie and couetous of getting abundance of loue and deſire, and therefore they thinke that which they haue to bee nothing, in compariſon of that which they would haue. But theſe men muſt be well confuted: their troubles, their attention, their meditations, their paines, their reading, their queſtions, their conference, their ioy in Chriſtian companie, their diligence in all good exerciſes with willingnes, doth manifeſtly ſhew the error of their doubts and feares. But may not an hypocrite do all theſe things, and yet haue no touch in him? But may an hypocrite doe all theſe things in good earneſt with reſiſtance of hypocriſie? May an hypocrite continue an hypocrite, and yet bewaile his want of ſinceritie in the preſence of God alone, with promiſe, and purpoſe to performe euery ſeruice more ſincerely, if poſſibly by any meanes he may be able? It was an argument wherewith *Dauid* confirmed his owne heart in aſſurance that he truly loued the Lord, and vnfainedly ſought his owne ſaluation, becauſe he loued the law of the Lord, meditated in his word and kept his precepts. And *Iob* taketh it for a ſure effect of his vprightnes, that he had not departed from the commandements of Gods lips, but eſteemed the words of his mouth more than his appointed foode.

*Is brutiſh, &c.* They that will not be ſchooled of God to learne Chriſtian knowledge, are no better than if they had no manner of knowledge. They are not all children that hate this kinde of correction: they are not all naturals: they are not all idiots, but they are all ſtarke fooles. Then many haue been fooles, and yet learned Philoſophers: and many haue been fooles, and yet deep Politicians: and many haue bin fooles, and yet euery way worldly wiſe men. This doth God charge vpon the multitude, the greater number of a whole people: *They are a nation voide of counſell, neither is there any vnderſtanding in them. Oh that they were wiſe, then they would vnderſtand this, they would conſider their latter end.* Yea the wittieſt of them are ſo reputed in the prophecie of Ieremy: *My people is fooliſh, they haue not knowne me:* *Doct.* Deut. 32. 28. 29. Ierem. 4. 22.

*they are foolish children, and haue none vnderstanding: they are wise to doe euill, but to doo well they haue no knowledge.*

*Reasons.* 1. First, their carnall wisedome is altogether vnsufficient to make them seruiceable to God, or any thing which they doe to be acceptable vnto him, and it standeth them in no steed for their credit. For those which bee vile in his eyes, shall in time be base in the sight of men: and the punishment of their follie in the end, shall make it appeare they were fooles all the time before. Of this point speaketh the Prophet: *The wisemen are ashamed, they are afraide and taken: loe, they haue reiected the word of the Lord, and what wisedome is in them?* Ierem. 8. 9.

2 Secondly, their carnall wisedome can neither preserue them from death, nor prepare them to die blessedly. It cannot stay their life from going, neither can it stop the curse from comming.

3 Thirdly, it cannot deliuer them from damnation in the world to come, but rather increase the grieuousnes of their punishment. It hath kept possession against this holy vnderstanding: it hath made them vncapable of all good instructions: it hath made them impatient of any rebuke: it hath held them in ignorance and disobedience all their life, and see what their ignorance will bring them vnto after their death: *The Lord Iesus shall shew himselfe from heauen with his mightie Angels in flaming fire, rendring vengeance to them that know not God, and which obey not the Gospell of our Lord Iesus Christ.* 2. Thess. 1. 8. Now lay all these things together, and see wherein any man is bettered by any knowledge or wisedome which is ioyned with contempt of grace. Doth hee thinke to please God the better? the more is he offended. Doth he hope to winne credit by it? it will bring him to shame. Would he haue it to keepe him from troubles? it will draw him into them. His death is made the more vncomfortable and bitter, and his destruction following much more horrible and fearfull.

*Vse.* Admonition to take heed that we conforme not our opinions to the iudgement of the world: for that is directly contrarie to the testimonie of God. Carnall reason, and sturdie affections, and vnbrideled tongues say, that they are fooles which will digest reproofes and checks, and suffer themselues to be censured: but the heauenly wisedome and diuine trueth, the sacred scriptures

tures ſay, that they are wiſe which hearken to the rebukes of Gods holy word: and fooles as bad as beaſts that deſpiſe them. *Ob.* But men will laugh at our ſimplicitie, if wee ſit downe by ſuch indignities. *Reſp.* But God will laugh at our miſeries if we quarrell with admonitions and counſels when hee vouchſafeth them vnto vs. Prou. 1. 26.

Verſe 2. *A good man getteth fauour of the Lord: but a man of wicked imaginations will he condemne.*

A *Good man*, which ſetteth his heart to deuiſe of goodnes, and performeth the ſame in practiſe, *getteth fauour of the Lord*, that is, inioyeth the aſſurance and comfort of his louing kindneſſe in his ſoule, and the good effects thereof both in ſoule and bodie, and euerie other way. *But a man of wicked imaginations, &c.* It is the deſcription of a wicked man by a periphraſis, that he is as it were made of ſinfull thoughts, and purpoſes, and is in the midſt of them.

A good man may ſometimes haue euill imaginations, as *Dauid* had to deſtroy the whole houſe of *Nabal*, but it was the imagination of the man, and he was not a man of ſuch imaginations. *Hee will condemne, &c.* The diſpleaſure of God againſt him is declared by the effect, hee will conuince him, and find him guiltie, that is, paſſe ſentence vpon him, and cauſe execution to bee done accordingly. Thus then ſtandeth the oppoſition: A good man of godly meditations getteth fauour of the Lord, who therefore will ſaue him: but an euill man of wicked imaginations, incurreth the diſpleaſure of the Lord, who therefore will condemne him.

A man can no way be made ſo happie as by beeing in Gods fauour. If any other thing were better then this, it would here be named: for his purpoſe is to promiſe and performe the beſt. Good men doe ſet their wits on worke to finde the way whereby they may moſt pleaſe him: and hee doth ſet his wiſedome on work to frame a recompence that may beſt pleaſure them. *Doct. 2.*

What account *Dauid* and others made of the fauour of God, is ſhewed in diuers places of the Pſalmes, as when they breake out

ſo

so earnestly into prayer, and redouble their petition, *Turne vs againe O Lord God of hosts: cause thy face to shine vpon vs, and wee shall be saued.* That is, helpe vs out of our captiuitie: restore vs to the place and meanes of thy worship: let vs feele the testimonies of thy loue, and our state will be blessed and happie. So where the same is acknowledged with thankfulnesse: *Thy louing kindnes is better then life: therefore my lippes shall praise thee.* Neither is this onely *Dauids* testimonie, or feeling, or estimation of Gods loue towards him, but many others haue made such precious account thereof, as that they indured the losse of all their substance, and libertie, and life it selfe, and that with bitter paines and torment, rather then they would doe any thing that might moue the Lord to be angrie with them.

Psal.80.19.

Psal.63.3.

Heb.11.36,37

*Reasons.* 1. First, in regard of the rarenes of it, it is a flower which groweth only in Gods owne garden. It is a priuiledge and freedome peculiar and proper to the children of God; the Lord neuer giueth good countenance to a wicked person, his anger is euermore towards sinners: whereas in all earthly things, they are commoners with vs, and commonly haue the greater share. It is therefore the more precious, because it is but for few, and those thereby both made and declared to bee excellent, hauing no vnworthie person of their companie to disgrace them.

2 Secondly, in regard of the continuance of it, it is not worne out by time; it vanisheth not away: it is neuer taken from them, vpon whom it is bestowed. Their faults may cause it to bee hid from them for a season (as *Dauid* felt by wofull experience, when he had committed that grieuous sinne of murder and adulterie) but lost it cannot be, nor long concealed: for it will worke in them the grace of humiliation, that they may behold it to their ioy and comfort.

3 Thirdly, in regard of those singular good effects wherewith it is alwaies accompanied; what is desireable here in this world, that it will not yeeld vnto vs? And what happinesse is there in the world to come, that it will not aduance vs vnto?

Defence from enemies, and safety from dangers euery creature seeketh after, and this doth Gods goodnesse bring to euery one that is godly. *Thou Lord* (saith *Dauid*) *wilt blesse the righteous,*

Psal.5.12.

and

*and with fauour wilt compaſſe him, as with a ſhield.*

Gladneſſe of heart and comfort is that which euery man much affecteth, and this the loue and fauour of God doth miniſter to all thoſe that be partakers of it. And this doth *Dauid* alſo profeſſe himſelfe to haue experience of, and therefore preferreth the louing countenance of the Lord before all the commodities and pleaſures which worldly men ſo much long after. *Many ſay, who will ſhew vs any good, but Lord lift vp the light of thy countenance vpon vs. Thou haſt giuen me more ioy of heart, then they haue had, when their wheate and their wine did abound.* It is needeleſſe to reckon vp other things, ſithence the ſufficiencie of al good things is inferred by theſe, otherwiſe there were not ſo much ſafetie, neither would there be ſo great ioy and gladneſſe. Pſal. 4. 6. 7.

Inſtruction, that our cheefe care and indeuour be to pleaſe the Lord, ſeeing that ſo great a benefit proceedeth from it. Euery one of his ſeruants hath great wages in hand, if hee had nothing elſe but his Maſters good will. It is ſaid of all others that men cannot liue by their faire ſpeeches, and good countenance; but let God looke cheerefully vpon vs, and ſpeake comfortablie to vs, and ſure we are that we are in no want. Our preſent pay is better preferm̃et then any mortall creature can raiſe vs vp to, though he were the moſt mightie monarch on the earth, beſides all that remaineth for the time to come, eſpecially when wee ſhall haue ſo neere acceſſe to the preſence of our heauenly father, wherein is the fulneſſe of ioy; and at whoſe right hand there are pleaſures for euer more. *Vſe.* 1. Pſal. 16. 11.

Conſolation to them that haue receiued vndoubted teſtimonies of the fauour of God. Bleſſed are they preſently, though men diſcerne not how happie they are made by it: but more bleſſed ſhall all the world behold them to be at that great day and glorious appearance of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. The conſideration of the terror that will be at that time, made S. *Paul* himſelfe to labour that both in life and death hee might bee acceptable to him, as knowing that moſt fearefull is their ſtate whom hee ſhall then be diſpleaſed with: and thriſe happie beyond all that morrall mans thought can comprehend, to whom hee then ſhall declare his kindnes. But in the meane time, ſay ſome, they bee ma- 2. 2. Cor. 5. 9.

ligned

ligned and moleſted more then any, and none haue ſo many enemies as they. But who knoweth whether Gods fauour may not make men fauourable to thē? It is ſaid that whē the waies of a man pleaſe the Lord, he will make alſo his enemies at peace with him, Prou. 16.7. Or if they be implacable, and mightie alſo, yet this is the comfort of the faithfull that God himſelfe will ouerliue them, and his might will ouermatch them, and his louing kindnes will bee exerciſed dailie, as *Dauid* told that bragging *Doeg*; Pſalm. 52.1.

*Doct.* 2. *The man of wicked imaginations, &c.* The Lord doth not onely proceede againſt the wicked for their vngodly actions, but for ſinnefull thoughts and purpoſes. But the proſecution of this point we reſerue for the ſixe and twentith verſe of the fifteenth chapter, where it is ſaid that the thoughts of the wicked are abomination to the Lord.

Verſe 3. *A man cannot bee eſtabliſhed by wickednes: but the roote of the righteous cannot be moued.*

SInfulneſſe may ſeeme to ſerue a mans turne, but in the ende it ſhall appeare it neuer did him good. For howſoeuer it is an occaſion of lifting many men vp on hie in proſperity, yet it giueth them no ſure footing in their ſtate, but downe they fall, and then it had been better for them to haue ſtoode ſtill on the ground. Wicked men ofter grow greater, and fatter then others, but their ſetling is not ſo faſt and firme, as the other part ſheweth. The righteous though they be not ſo tall and ſpreading vpwards, yet they take roote the ſtronger downewards: and though their boughes be ſhaken aboue, yet that will not looſen his hold beneath. This is the oppoſition, The vngodly ſhall not be eſtabliſhed by wickednes, but his roote ſhal be plucked vp; but the righteous ſhall be eſtabliſhed by godlines, and his roote ſhall not bee moued.

*Doct.* 1. They ſhall miſſe of their expectation that hope to ſuccour themſelues by ſinning. They applie a venomous plaiſter to their ſore: they drinke ſtrong poiſon for a medicine: and they prop vp their roofe with burning firebrands. But the holy Ghoſt directeth

recteth euery one of vs to a courſe directly contrarie to this in the booke of Iob: *If iniquitie be in thine hand, put it farre away, and let no wickedneſſe dwell in thy tabernacle. Then truly ſhalt thou lift vp thy face without ſpot, and ſhalt be ſtable, and ſhalt not feare.* And he doth indent with them whom hee will deliuer from death and miſerie, that they ſhall confeſſe that their wickednes could ſtand them in no ſteed: *If one ſay, I haue ſinned, and peruerted righteouſneſſe, and it did not profit me, he will deliuer his ſoule from going into the pit, and his life ſhall ſee the light,* Iob 33.27.28. Iob 11.14.

*Saul* dealt very fooliſhly in vndermining the foundation of his houſe by diſobedience, and the ſeeking to hold it vp by perſecuting of *Dauid*: And *Ieroboam* dealt not wiſely, who (when the Lord promiſed to build him a ſure houſe, as he built to *Dauid*, if he would keepe his ſtatutes and commandements, as *Dauid* did) deuiſed another tricke to confirme the kingdome to himſelfe and his poſteritie, and that was by ſetting vp the idolatrous Calues at Dan and Bethel. 1.Reg.11.38.

*Reaſons.* 1. First, it is the very proper effect of ſinne to procure ruine, and to bring men to a downfall. And thereupon the Prophet *Hoſea* doth ground his exhortation: *O Iſrael returne vnto the Lord thy God: for thou haſt fallen by thine iniquitie,* Hoſ.14.2. As if he ſhould haue ſaid, Let experience make you wiſe: neuer truſt to ſin any more, but ſeeke vnto God: for looke what ſucceſſe you finde by your euill waies now, the ſame be ſure of euer: no man can ſpeed by ſuch a bad meanes.

2 Secondly, the riſing, ſtanding, and falling of euery man is in Gods owne hand, who alone ſetteth vp, and confirmeth, and caſteth downe at his will. And how then can ſinne yeeld any ſtabilitie to ſinners, which haue his wrath, and threatnings, and oth, and hand againſt them? It cannot draw kindnes from him, to aſſiſt them in fauour. Force will be of no force to compell to it by feare. And wiſedome makes it impoſſible to intice him to it by craft.

3 Thirdly, if men might haue eſtabliſhment by wickednes, many abſurd and dangerous conſequents would follow vpon it. The curſes of the Law would be of ſmall effect: the moſt ſinfull ſhifters would make their ſtate the ſureſt: and Satan ſhould be-

come their beneficiall friend, whose soules are most peruerted by him.

*Vse.* Instruction, that forasmuch as we may know that we shall lose our labour in seeking any sinfull helpes, that Gods displeasure will be increased, our miserie increased, our guiltinesse increased, and euery thing increased that may increase our sorow and torment, that therefore henceforth we deceiue our selues no more, in expecting helpe at that which altogether turneth to our hurt. We would all stand as firme, and as impregnable castles, but wee make a quicke sand our foundation, and mudde walles our stone worke, and stubble and reedes our strongest timber. It would grow to a large volume if we should relate the seuerall kindes of sinnes where by we haue sought to serue our owne turnes, as falsehood in word by lying, falsehood in deed by stealing, and deceitfulnes of diuers sotts, flatterie, couetousnes, crueltie, hypocrisie, running to witches: and what not? But many volumes are not able to containe the particular facts whereof wee stand guiltie, only Gods book, and that of our own conscience are capacious enough for them. And therefore it is time for vs to pull downe our owne ruinous building, lest it fall downe vpon our heads, and make vs fall downe to destruction. For though it bee too slight, and as weake as a cobweb to bee a couert ouer vs, yet it is very heauie, and as weightie as a mountaine to presse vs vnder it. Let vs seriously consider, that whatsoeuer is offensiue to God cannot be defensiue for vs, and that which doth bring any perill to the soule, can neuer possibly bring safetie to state or bodie. Away then from our own deuices, from all fleshly and vnlawful meanes of helpe, and let vs runne with speede to him that neuer failed to succour any that vnfainedly sought helpe at his hands. And this may be our incouragement hereunto, that wee goe not vnsent, nor come vnbidden. His owne will, his owne word calleth vpon vs with many promises for that purpose: *If thou returne to the Almightie, thou shalt be built vp, and thou shalt put iniquitie farre from thy tabernacle. The Almightie shall be thy defence, and thou shalt haue plentie of siluer. When others are cast downe, thou shalt say, I am lifted vp: and God shall saue the humble person:* Iob.22.23. 25.29.

Verse

**Verſe 4.** *A vertuous woman is the crowne of her huſband: but ſhe that maketh him aſhamed is a rottennes in his bones.*

A *vertuous woman*, which feareth God, and loueth her huſband, and is faithful in her calling, *is a crowne to her huſband*, ſhe is for his honour and credit, and conſequently for his profit and comfort. *But ſhe that maketh him aſhamed*, which either by her lewdnes, and rudenes doth bring him into contempt, or at leaſt maketh him to hold downe his head, or by negligence, pride, and waſtfulnes doth weaken his eſtate, and bringeth him to want, ſhe *is a rottennes in his bones*, that is, a torment and corraſiue to his heart, as grieuous as the ach of the bones, or corruption of the marrow, which is more painfull and incurable than an vlcer in the fleſh. The antitheſis is thus: A vertuous woman is the crowne of her husband, and ſo a great ioy and gladnes to his heart: but a vicious woman is a ſhame to her husband, and as a rottennes in his bones.

No outward thing in all the world is better than a good wife. *Doct.* It is not ſo well with a rich man that hath his houſe ſtored with abundance of wealth, as with a poore man that hath his houſe garniſhed with a Chriſtian wife, ſo that hee be alſo a godly man, and a faithfull husband. By this meanes hee may be made conſpicuous, though his ſtate and degree were otherwiſe obſcure: and it is lawfull in this ſort, for a meane ſubiect, without diſloyaltie to his Prince, to weare a crowne of good reputation and credit. If the valew and brightnes of pearles and precious ſtones draw mens eyes to behold them that poſſeſſe and weare them, much more will this rich iewell, whoſe price and beautie exceedeth the beſt of them. For God himſelfe who ſeeth euery ſort of them, and euery one of them, and knoweth their ſeuerall worths, and hath made them all, hee ſetteth a gracious wife at an higher rate than any of them, and ſaith, *that her price is farre aboue Carbuncles.* Prou. 31. 10.

Firſt, they are very ſcarce and hard to come by, and therefore it is ſaid, *Who ſhall finde a vertuous woman?* There are incomparably more wiues than God will praiſe for good wiues, and more *Reaſons.* 1. Prou. 31. 10.

maides and widowes than hee will commend to good men to match with. As therefore thoſe that are gracious are rare, ſo are they alſo the more remarkable, and ſo they more adorne their husbands. If crownes were as commonly worne as hats, men would eſteeme of hats as much as of crownes.

2 Secondly, good wiues to godly men are all of the Lords pro-
Prou.18.22. uiding, he made the match in mercie and fauour, and therefore the more to be regarded. He more immediatly declareth his loue in this, than in beſtowing lands and liuings, or any other goods or ſubſtance. So ſaith this Scripture: *Houſe and riches are the inheritance of the fathers: but a prudent wife commeth of the Lord:* Prou.19.14.

3 Thirdly, man hath more intereſt in his wife, than he can haue in any other creature. She is appropriated to him with neereſt bonds of vnion. She is not ſo properly called his, as a part of him, and one fleſh with him. As the two parts of man, ſoule and body make one perſon; ſo two perſons, man and woman, make one matrimoniall bodie. Then how ſhould he not take comfort in her graces and gifts, which are made his owne together with her?

4 Fourthly, the benefits which a vertuous wife doth bring to a worthy husband, are manifold, and worthie to be regarded. She will labour to refreſh his heart with comfort, and to preſerue his bodie in health: ſhe will be a helper for his familie, and prouident for his ſtate: ſhe will be tender of his credite, and cheerefull to his friends: ſhe will euery way applie her ſelfe to ſhew her loue, and procure his beſt proſperitie. Theſe we ſhall handle particularlie in the one and thirtie chapter, if God permit vs to proceede ſo farre. Contrarie to the waies of this good woman is the behauiour of a bad wife, who worketh both ſhame and griefe to her huſband. All her ſinfulneſſe maketh him aſhamed, vnleſſe hee bee ſhameleſſe, which is his greater ſhame. A wicked ſonne is a blot to his father, and a diſordered ſeruant is no credit to his maiſter, and therefore much more doth an vngodly wife diſgrace and blemiſh her yoke-fellow. And as ſhe putteth matter of talk into other mens mouthes, ſo ſhe laieth burdens vpon his backe, and powreth ſorrowes into his heart by contempt, and wrongs, and indignities.

indignities. Oh the calamitie of them that are put to harbour their enemies harlots in their owne beds, and boſoms! And what a miſerie is it for a man to commit the greateſt part of his ſubſtance to her that is a priuie theefe, whereby ſhee hath all before her, to chooſe what ſhee will to rob him of! And hard is their caſe whoſe wiues are meere ſpies to know, and diſcouer, and publiſh abroad their ſecrets, and faults, and infirmities to their great reproach. And what ſhall wee ſpeake of ſuch as are ſwiniſh with drunkenneſſe? and of gadders, and buſie bodies abroad? which in all contentions are alwaies parties, and whereſoeuer they come, they raiſe contentions? What comfort doe theſe women miniſter to their husbands that loue peace, and ſobrietie? As for ſuch as are turbulent in their owne houſes, and froward, and rebellious againſt their head, the ſpirit of God telleth vs, what profitable, pleaſant, and amiable companions they be. In the nineteenth chapter of this booke it is ſaid, that *the contentions of a wife are like a continuall dropping*. Conſider what vexation it is for a man to haue raine falling faſt vpon his head, and bodie, eſpecially if there be no intermiſſion that he may drie himſelfe againe: and moſt of all if it be through the rooſe of his houſe to rot his timber, and ſpoile his ſtuffe, and take away the comfort of his meate and reſt: when at bed and boord, and euery where, hee ſhall be as it were vnder a running ſpout. And elſewhere he affirmeth, that *it is better to dwell in a corner of the houſe top*, (that is on a pinnacle vpon the top of the houſe without) *then with a contentious woman in a wide houſe*. And yet more in the ſame chapter, that *it is better to dwell in the wilderneſſe* among wild beaſts, *then with a contentious and angrie woman*. Prou 19,13. Prou. 21.9. verſ. 19.

Inſtruction to ſuch as be vnmarried to haue principall reſpect of vertue and grace in their choice. As for parentage, perſonage, portion, and other things of like nature, let them be regarded, if they waite vpon religion, and pietie, otherwiſe ſuffer them not to put wiues vpon you, or rather preſſe ſorrow, and ſhame vpon you, as many feele to their woe, which onely looke to outward things. 2. To ſuch as are maried, if God hath vouchſafed them that mercie to giue them vertuous women, let them both giue him the *Vſe.* 1.

praiſe, and take the comfort to themſelues, whether they bee rich or poore, and vſe all good vſage and incouragement to ſuch good yokefellowes. A iuſt teſtimonie and commendations of
Pro. 31.29.31. them, and ſometimes vnto them, ſufficient allowance both of libertie and maintenance, according to their husbands abilitie, is due vnto them, in equitie and iuſtice. But whatſoeuer their abilitie is, they are able to ſhew kindneſſe, and good countenance to them, and that muſt not be wanting. Saint *Paul* would haue huſ-
Col. 3.19. bands to loue their wiues therfore, becauſe they are wiues, and to be bitter to none, much leſſe to be fierce, and churliſh, and boiſterous to them that are good. But if they bee yoked with thoſe of the other ſort, their miſerie is a good motiue to ſend them to God to ſeeke his helpe, and more to labour to pleaſe him themſelues, that he may make their wiues to be better vnto them. For if it be in his hand before marriage to make them godly, and to prepare them for his ſeruants, it is as much alſo in his power to conuert them afterwards: which if he doe not, yet they ſhall haue more ſtrength to beare the burden with greater eaſe.

2 Reproofe of their ſinne and follie, that like nothing leſſe, nor labour againſt any thing ſo much as to haue their wiues to bee religious and godly. They more hate pietie and grace, then they loue beautie and wealth, and would ſooner chuſe one of no ſubſtance, then of great goodnes. But indeede they are not driuen to that extremity, it is no difficult matter to many that haue great riches, to be of little ſanctification, and therefore they haue their deſires double ſatiſfied in getting wealth & wickednes together. How many doe we daily ſee that withhold their wiues from all good meanes of godlines: that diſſwade them, diſcourage them, and ſometimes by ſtrong hand reſtraine them from comming to the preaching of Gods holy word, whereby their ſoules might be inſtructed? How many teach their wiues pride, and ſtraine themſelues beyond their abilitie to maintaine them in gariſhnes? How many doe bring their wiues into ſuch company, and to ſuch exerciſes, as infect their eyes, and eares, and tongues, and heart, and euery ſenſe with luſt and wantonneſſe? Is it not righteous from God that theſe husbands ſhould bee plagued with the laiſhnes,

uiſhnes, and ſtubberneſſe, and whoriſhneſſe of their wiues, which haue ſo poyſoned their ſoules, and drawne them to ſuch lewde and ſinfull behauiour?

Verſe 5. *The thoughts of the iuſt are right: but the counſels of the wicked are deceit.*

GOdly men are not altogether voide of thoughts, that are not right and allowable: ſometimes Sathan caſteth in matter to turne them out of the right courſe: ſometimes their owne fleſh will play it part, and ſtirre vp deſires of commoditie and praiſe, and pleaſures and ſuch like in them; but theſe are as the muddines that may be for a time in a good fountaine that is troubled: theſe they allow not: theſe they reſiſt, and iudge themſelues for, and therefore God taketh notice only of thoſe that are good, tending to his ſeruice, and glorie, their owne ſaluation, and the benefite of their brethren. On the other ſide, *the counſels of the wicked*, that is, their deuiſes, plots, and purpoſes in themſelues (for they are here rather the worke of the mind, then of the tongue, and oppoſed to the thoughts of the godly) are deceit, tending either to the circumvention, and wronging of others, or to the cloaking and hiding of their owne ſinfulneſſe.

The godly differ as much from the wicked in inward cogitati- *Doct.*
ons and purpoſes, as in outward conuerſation and practiſe. At the firſt creation man was made to excell the brute beaſts more by the reaſon and gifts of the ſoule, then by the faſhion and ſhape of the bodie: and at the ſecond, a Chriſtian is made to excell ſinfull men more by the holineſſe and working of the ſoule, then by the actions and workes of the bodie. This cauſed the Apoſtle S. *Paul* to vrge the Epheſians with ſo earneſt an aſſeueration and atteſtation, that hereby they ſhould cleere their regeneration vnfalliblie, and put it out of all doubt and queſtion. *This I ſay, and* Epheſ. 4. 17.
*teſtifie in the Lord, that yee henceforth walke not as other Gentiles walke in vanitie of their mind, hauing their cogitations darkned, &c.* And *Iſaiah* commeth to ſpeake of ſome ſpecials, and ſheweth what a contrarietie there is betweene their thoughts and meditations. *The heart*, ſaith he, *of the niggard will worke iniquitie, he deuiſeth*

*uiſeth euill counſels to vndoe the poore with lying words: but the liberall man will deuiſe of liberall things, and will continue his liberality,* Iſa. 32.6.7.8.

*Reaſons.* 1. Firſt, the one ſort are led by the word and ſpirit of God, and therefore will thinke of ſuch things as they worke in them, and perſwade them vnto: the other are led by the fleſh, and Sathan, and therefore will thinke of ſuch things as they ſuggeſt.

2 Secondly, the hearts of the one are repleniſhed with Chriſtian loue, and therefore they will meditate how they may beſt exerciſe it in doing good: and the other are poſſeſt with ſelfe-loue, and they will deuiſe how they may ſerue their owne turnes though with neuer ſo much hurt and miſchiefe.

3 Thirdly, the treaſures of the one are in heauen, and therefore their hearts are there, and their thoughts are taken vp about heauenly things; and the happines of the other is in earth, and ſinne, and therefore they are alwaies pondring of earthly and ſinfull matters.

4 Fourthly, the heart and purpoſe is the roote from whence the actions ſpring and receiue their life, and therfore good men could not performe ſo many good ſeruices, and haue them ſo well accepted of God, and the wicked would not fall into ſo many foule ſinnes, and be ſo much hated of him, vnleſſe they had contrarie mindes and affections, the godly holy and righteous, and the wicked impious and deceitfull.

*Vſe.* 1. Inſtruction to examine and trie the ſtate of our ſoules by this rule, let vs conſider not onely what we haue done, and how men conceiue of vs, but with what mind wee haue performed euery good dutie, and how the Lord doth eſteeme of vs. He trieth the raines, he ſearcheth the heart, hee looketh vpon the purpoſes, and deſires. That which no creature ſeeth or taketh knowledge of, he praiſeth, and rewardeth: that which the world admireth and magnifieth, he hateth and abhorreth. So our Sauiour told the Luk. 16. 15. Phariſes, *Yee are they which iuſtifie your ſelues before men: but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly eſteemed among men, is abomination in the ſight of God.*

2 Reproofe of them that turne their hearts looſe, permitting their thoughts to ſtraggle whitherſoeuer they will at their pleaſure, and

and thinke it ſafe to ſatisfie themſelues in filthie luſts, in proud imaginations, in bitter grudgings, and in diuers idle, vaine, and fooliſh conceits. It is accounted by many for a part of mans libertie that thought is free: but they that take that libertie are brought into the moſt grieuous ſeruitude, to become ſlaues and bondmen to thoſe free thoughes. Now if deceitfull counſels conuince men to bee euill, as the Scripture ſaith they doe, what can the Papiſts ſay for themſelues, why they ſhould be reputed good? Did euer any kinde of people lay their plots for greater miſchiefes? Did euer any ſeeke to act their purpoſes with greater falſehood and treacherie? What fidelitie is to bee found in their words, in their proteſtations, in their ſolemne oathes? They ſay many things, which the purpoſe of not doing them is the cauſe why they ſay them. Then they pretend the moſt obedience, when they intend the greateſt diſobedience: and looke for ſome notable diſloialtie from them, when they are readie to ſweare to be loyall.

Verſe 6. *The talking of the wicked is to lie in waite for blood: but the mouth of the righteous will deliuer them.*

THeſe words are not to be vnderſtood to meane all ſorts of wicked men, but ſuch as are malitious; and their ſpeeches too, of ſuch as they maligne, doe principally tend to the inſnaring and catching of them, and that to their deſtruction, ſo farre as they can effect it: if not by violence vpon their bodies to the taking away of their liues, yet by oppreſſion otherwiſe to the ruine of their eſtate. Now the contrarie is to bee found in the godly, who vſe their lips, as much as in them is, to ſuccour ſuch as the wicked lie in waite for; either as *Pauls* nephew did, by diſcouering the practiſes againſt them, or being ſuiters for them, or cleering their innocencie. And this is ſpoken of their endeuour, and not of the euent, for that is many times otherwiſe.

*Lie in waite, &c.* It is the propertie of violent men to mixe their crueltie with craftineſſe. *Doct.* 1.

Their tongues worke as well as their hands, and their hearts and heads giue direction to their tongues: and hands, and

tongues, and hearts, and heads doe all conſpire and combine themſelues againſt poore innocents. Such the Prophet complaineth of in the Pſalmes: *He lieth in waite ſecretly, euen as a lion in his denne: he lieth in waite to ſpoile the poore: he doth ſpoile the poore, when he draweth him into his net. He croucheth and boweth: and therefore heapes of the poore doe fall by his might.*

Pſal.10.9.10.

Many deuices deceitfull tongues haue, to bring their purpoſes to paſſe. Sometimes by flatterie, or otherwiſe to draw aduantages from him whom they practiſe againſt, according as our Sauiour was ſundrie times dealt with. Sometimes by incenſing, or perſwading others, whoſe diſpleaſure and power may worke that which themſelues could neuer effect, as *Haman* did, and *Amaziah*, and *Daniels* aduerſaries alſo, though in another manner: Dan.6. Sometimes by taking opportunitie of the time, when it ſerueth them, as *Doeg* did againſt the Prieſts, when *Saul* himſelfe was offended with *Ionathan*, for fauouring *Dauid*. Who can reckon all when there are ſo many, and euery day new inuentions of moe?

Luk.22.21.

Amos 7.10.

*Reaſons.* 1. Firſt, the diuell is their director, and teacheth them what courſe to take, and all the world knoweth and feeleth that hee is both fierce and ſubtill, being a bloodie red dragon for crueltie, and hauing ſeuen heads for craft.

2 Secondly, their owne ſtudie and exerciſe hath made them expert and skilfull in their helliſh trade: and the taſte of blood hath made them as hungrie as hounds after it.

*Vſe.* Inſtruction to auoide as much as wee may, both conuerſation and conference with them. Of receiuing harme, we ſtand in great perill; of effecting good, wee can haue little expectation. It is no hard matter for the foxe or lion to make the lambe to feele their wilineſſe or violence: but it is not eaſie for the lambe to teach the lion, or foxe, his innocencie.

*Doct.2.* *But the mouth &c.* It is a note of a good man to haue his good word readie to helpe them that are oppreſſed.

There be many that refraine from traducing, accuſing, and intrapping their neighbours, which yet goe not farre enough to ſhew themſelues mercifull and righteous: there are many that will ſpeake in the praiſe of godly men, free from troubles and moleſta-

moleſtations, and yet declare not ſufficient loue to God and his people: but here is loue, here is courage, here is faithfulnes, herein they make it appeare that they are not accepters of perſons, when they applie their wits, and tongues, and countenance in their places, for the defence of harmeleſſe men that are helpleſſe. In this ſenſe doth the Holy Ghoſt call vpon men in the foure and twentith chapter: *Deliuer them that are drawne to death: and wilt not thou preſerue them that are led to be ſlaine?* Prou.24.11.

Firſt, they are the members of our owne bodie, and therefore their communion and neereneſſe with vs, ſhould moue vs to it. Who would not open his lips for a father, or brother, or friend, (as did that faithfull *Ionathas*) but chiefly for himſelfe? Who would not doe his beſt to ſhew the equitie of his owne cauſe? Who would not intreate hard to ſaue his owne head, or hand, or foote, or any other part of him? So doe all good men that deale in the behalfe of any iuſt and righteous perſon, the caſe is their owne. *Reaſons.* 1

Secondly, they are the members of Chriſt who is head to vs, and therefore ſince he ſpared not to ſpeake, and ſuffer for vs: ſince he prayed, and pleaded, and payed euen his owne life and naturall bodie for our deliuerance, is it much for vs to beſtow our words, or to beare a rebuke to deliuer thoſe that haue a place in his myſticall bodie? 2

Thirdly, it is the way to prouide helpe from God, and good men, againſt our owne troubles, to be helpfull to others in theirs: and the contrarie befalleth them that are ſlacke and remiſſe in this dutie. 3

Fourthly, we doe after a ſort make our ſelues acceſſarie to the wrongs and iniuries which are offered to the righteous, when they either come vpon them by our negligence, or fearefulnes. 4

Inſtruction for euery degree to be diligent and carefull in the performance of this dutie. Art thou a Magiſtrate? Remember what leſſon *Salomons* mother beſtowed vpon him: *Open thy mouth for the dumbe in the cauſe of all the children of deſtruction. Open thy mouth: iudge righteouſly, and iudge the afflicted, and the poore.* Art thou a priuate man, yet thou maiſt giue aduice, or teſtifie the truth, or ſolicite friends, or at leaſt thou maiſt call vpon *Vſe.* 1. Prou.31.8.9.

God for them that bee pursued by oppressors.

2 Consolation to all good patrones of poore distressed mens causes; which take to heart their wrongs and burthens, and seeke relieſe and remedie for them. They would not ſo faithfully labour for righteouſneſſe, vnleſſe themſelues were righteous: they could not ſhew ſuch pitie to good men, vnleſſe they loued goodneſſe, and God loued them: for effectuall compaſſion and mercie is neuer found in any that is not vnder mercie. 2. To them that haue enemies lying in waite for their blood; if they be innocent and godly, the Lord will ſtirre them vp friends, that will fauour their cauſe, and ſtand in their defence. Some *Iob* or other
Iob 29.12. wil deliuer them, though they be poore and fatherleſſe, and haue none to helpe them. Or if there be none that fauour them at the bench, yet there be that will obtaine fauour for them from heauen. The prayers of Gods people aſcend vp to Gods preſence for his helpe: and thoſe mouthes preuaile mightily that ſeeke for redreſſe of wrongs at his hands. *Herod* thought that it would be too late for all the friends which *Peter* had to miniſter helpe vnto him when hee had clapt him vp in ſo ſure a priſon. But hee remembred not how ſwift the godly be to prayer: and how ſoone a prayer can come to God: and in what readines God hath his Angels: and what ſpeede an Angell can make to ſuccour them that are in danger. Yet this is not the greateſt comfort of Gods afflicted ſeruants, but this that the Lord Ieſus Chriſt is infinitely more righteous and mercifull than any man, or all men poſſiblie can be, and he will vndertake their cauſe, and either miniſter help to their ſtate, or grace to their ſoules, to beare their troubles, till the fitteſt time of freedome from them. He will preſerue them from ſinne and Satan which lie in waite for their eternall deſtruction. The ſpirit of God is large in one of the Pſalmes in ſetting foorth the tender care which he hath of his people: *He ſhall deliuer the poore when he crieth: the needie alſo, and him that hath no helpe. He ſhall be mercifull to the poore and needie, and ſhall preſerue the ſoules of the poore. He ſhall redeeme their ſoules from deceit and violence, and deare ſhall their blood be in his ſight*: Pſal. 72.12.13.14.

Verſe

Verse 7. *God ouerthroweth the wicked, and they are not: but the house of the righteous shall stand.*

WHen the state of the vngodly which are not Gods chosen, changeth from prosperitie to aduersitie, it seldome staieth, till they be vtterly destroyed, both themselues, & their houses; This word, *are not*, signifieth a slaughter and killing, as it is spoken of the murdering of the infants by *Herod*, Mat. 2. 18. Ier. 31. 15. But here is more vnderstood, than the losse of naturall life, and that is, the perdition of soule and bodie. And yet not the extinction of either: for the soule shall neuer vanish away, nor the bodie for euer: they shall not finde so much mercie at Gods hands. Their being shall not cease, but their comfortable and well being. They shall be euerlasting, euerlastinglie to beare the burden of Gods wrath, and to suffer the vnsufferable torment of death and damnation. *But the house of the righteous*, that is, he, and those things which appertaine vnto him shall bee preserued from being ouerthrowne to ruine.

They that will not keepe themselues from wickednesse, cannot keepe themselues from desolation. *Doct.*

And they may rise, but not stand: for, vnlesse they fall to repentance, they shall be made to fall to destruction. They may grow great, but for a small time, for they will soone bee brought to nothing.

The prophet thought too well of their state at y first, as though they had bin in better case then any other men: but he conceiued as hardly of it at the last, when he had seene their end in the sanctuarie, and deemed them of all to bee most miserable. *Surelie*, saith he to the Lord, *thou hast set them in slipperie places, and castest them downe into desolation. How suddenlie are they destroyed, perished, and horriblie consumed!* The Scriptures flow with testimonies and similies to declare both the certaintie, and suddennesse, and grieuousnesse of their decay; as the withering of plants, the putting out of lights, the vanity of dreames, the vanishing of smoake, and many others to the like purpose. Psal. 73. 18. 19

First, they haue all the threatnings of God against them: and *Reasons.* 1.

euery threatning ſendeth forth many curſes: and euery curſe bringeth many plagues.

2 Secondly, their owne deſerts, which in reſpect of any creature are infinite, doe draw vpon them iudgements and miſeries that are inexplicable.

3 Thirdly, the loue and trueth of God to his owne ſeruants, will not permit a perpetuall proſperitie to his enemies. By this hee perſwadeth them not to faint in their owne afflictions, becauſe a reward remaineth for them, and their end will be peace. By this Pſal.37.38. he perſwadeth them not to fret at wicked mens ſucceſſes, becauſe there remaine puniſhments for them, & their end is to be cut off.

*Vſe.* 1. Admonition to ſinfull men to tender their loue more that pitie them and deſire that their caſe may be better. If others tremble at their fall that is comming, which yet neither feele the paine nor be in the perill thereof, is it wiſedome for them to caſt off all care of themſelues, and onely picke quarrels againſt them that ſeeke their ſafetie? When their wound is incurable they will wiſh that they had better regarded the plaiſter, and the hand that applied it. When the diſeaſe is remedileſſe, they will rue the reiection of the medicine, and phyſition. When hell ſhall haue them in hold, they will bewaile the refuſall of their friendſhip that would haue directed them to heauen. It was good counſell of *Philip*, and Ioh.1.46. well followed of *Nathaniel*, when hee perſwaded him to come, and ſee whether Ieſus were not the Chriſt. And it was an indul- Ioh.20.27. gence of Chriſt to *Thomas*, to helpe his faith in his reſurrection, by the ſenſes of ſight and feeling: but for matters of puniſhment, and damnation, it is good to goe from them, and not to come at them: to heare Gods teſtimonie, and not to ſee it fulfilled vpon themſelues: to beleeue the trueth of that which is ſpoken, and not to feele it by their owne experience.

2 Conſolation, that ſinfull men ſhall not alwaies be moleſters of the godly, becauſe they ſhall not alwaies be. They ſhall not continually ouerſhadow the faithfull, becauſe they ſhall not ſtand continually. Though their ſhew bee great now, and terrible to Gods people, yet their change will bee greater, and fearefull to themſelues. He will ſpeedilie ouerturne them, and all their power of hurting ſhall be taken from them. Now their rootes are

low,

low, their toppes aloſt, and braunches broad, and thereby ouer-droppe all that is vnder them: then muſt their toppes come downe, and rootes riſe vp, and all their braunches wither. Now they are veſſels that are full of power, and wealth, and malice: but then muſt bee there a tranſpoſition: the bottome muſt bee vpward, and the brimmes muſt bee downeward, and all their fulneſſe be ſhed on the ground like water. The ground of this comfort is neither vaine, nor weake: for God himſelfe doth vrge it as a forcible reaſon to confirme the hearts of his people. *Feare thou not* (ſaith hee) *for I am with thee: bee not affraide, for I am thy God. Behold, all they that prouoke thee ſhall bee aſhamed and confounded; they ſhall be as nothing, and they that ſtriue with thee ſhall periſh. Thou ſhalt ſeeke them, and ſhalt not finde them: to wit, the men of thy ſtrife, for they ſhall be as nothing, and the men that warre againſt thee, as a thing of nought:* Iſai. 41.11.12.

For the firmenes of the righteous man, and of his houſe, ſee chapter the tenth, verſ. 2.25.

Verſe 8. *A man ſhall bee commended according to his wiſedome: but the froward in heart ſhall be deſpiſed.*

AS euery one is more wiſe and godly, ſo ſhall hee haue more true praiſe and honour: Sometimes, and very often the wicked ſhall commend him, commonly the righteous, and alwaies the Lord himſelfe, but moſt of all at the laſt day, before all men, and Angels, as our Sauiour telleth vs in the fiue and twentith of Matthew. Contrariewiſe *the froward in heart*, ſuch whoſe hearts reiect all good inſtructions, and graces, *ſhall bee deſpiſed*, and brought to contempt among men in this life, or their faults breake out after they are dead, or bee manifeſted before all the world at the day of the Lord. This is the oppoſition: Hee that is vpright of heart ſhall be commended for his wiſedome: but hee that is froward of heart, ſhall be deſpiſed for his follie.

They that are not voide of vprightneſſe and wiſedome, ſhall *Doct.* not be deſtitute of praiſe and honour.

Though ſome be blind that they cannot diſcerne of their vnderſtanding and graces, yet others haue their eie-ſight, and behold

hold them. Though some be dumbe, and will not speake of their vertues, yet others haue their lippes opened to commend them. Though some be malitious to carpe at, and deprauе them, yet others be faithfull to giue them their due testimonie. Neither is it a thing incident to some few, as though it belonged onelie to principall men and great personages, but to all of euery place that are therewith qualified, both hie and low, both puissant potentates, and meane bondmen and seruants. There is no exception, or limitation of degrees, when it is said, that *the wisedome of a man doth make his face to shine.* And seruants could not adorne the doctrine of God, if grace and godlinesse did not also adorne and beautifie them.

Eccl. 8. 1.

Tit. 2. 10.

*Reasons.* 1. First, God himselfe testifieth for them, and that is sufficient for their commendation: for hee is not allowed that praiseth himselfe, nor whom the world praiseth, but which is praised of the Lord.

2 Secondly, he hath all mens hearts and tongues in his hands to make them to thinke well and speake well of those whom hee would haue to be in credit. He appointed that cursing *Balaam* to speake for his people, and blesse them, when he came of purpose to cast out imprecations against them. He compelled *Saul* with his lippes to cleere *Dauid*, and to pronounce him iust and innocent, when he had his weapons in a readines to punish him as a rebell.

3 Thirdly, their owne amiable and louelie behauiour allureth the liking of men towards them, and obtaineth their good testimonie of them. *This wisedome that is from aboue*, this heauenly wisedom which the spirit of God worketh, *is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easie to bee intreated, full of mercie and good fruits, without iudging, and without hypocrisie.* The sight of these graces, the very report of them doth winne mens hearts, and draw their affections to those that exercise them, and much more when they feele the fruite and benefit thereof to themselues.

Iam. 3. 17.

Now where wisedome is wanting, and follie is flowing; where meekenesse is a stranger, and frowardnesse a commander, what is to be looked for, but reproach and contempt? Are the poorest seruants and handmaides commended on the other side? then the

the wealthieſt Lords and Maſters are deſpiſed on this ſide. Doth the Lord praiſe all ſuch as be godly wiſe? then doth he diſgrace all thoſe that be ſinfully fooliſh. Doth hee deriue mens teſtimonies and fauours to thoſe? then will he draine and draw them away from theſe. Is ſoft, and gentle, and mercifull behauiour a meanes to procure the good will of men? then ſowre, and churliſh, and cruell demeanour, will prouoke their offence and diſpleaſure. Generally, that which God ſpake concerning *Elies* houſe, holdeth true to all of both ſorts: *Them that honour me, I will honour, and they that deſpiſe me, ſhall be deſpiſed.* 1. Sam. 2. 30.

Reproofe of them that loue nothing ſo much as praiſe: for they are as deſirous of it as Phariſies; and yet nothing leſſe than wiſedome, nor practiſe any thing ſo much as follie. Doe they thinke that the dunghill of wickedneſſe is a fit mine to digge honour and credit out of? Doe they thinke that the puddle water of pride, and wantonnes, and vanitie, will make them beautifull to the eyes of men of vnderſtanding? Doe they thinke that the filth comming out of the ſinke of quaffing, and gaming, and ſwearing, and ſinfull exerciſes will ſend out a ſweete ſauour of reuerend eſtimation? Nay, their kind friend follie hath much abuſed them, and yet for her ſake they will ſtill illude themſelues alſo. Good men pitie them, and bad men deride them, the tongues of moſt deſpiſe them, the hearts of all condemne them. *Vſe.* 1.

Conſolation to them vpon whom the Lord hath multiplied the gifts of Chriſtian knowledge and wiſedome. Though all countenance ſhould ſeeke to diſcountenance them: though all wits ſhould ſet themſelues on worke to inuent their diſgrace: though all tongues ſhould be ſharpened to cut downe their credit: though all the vngodly Oratours in the world ſhould be turned into one *Tertullus* againſt them, yet they ſhould nothing preuaile: the praiſe that God putteth on, they cannot pluck off: they may as well ſtay the ſtarres and planets from ſhining, as take away the brightneſſe of grace and wiſedome. 2

Verſe 9. *He that is deſpiſed, and is his owne ſeruant, is better than he that boaſteth himſelfe, and lacketh bread.*

HE *that is deſpiſed*, that is of meane eſtate, for which the fooliſh proud worldlings commonly haue men in contempt, *and is his owne ſeruant*, that is, induſtrious and diligent by labour to prouide himſelfe of things that bee needfull, (and ſo euer they may truly be called their owne ſeruants, that are faithfull in another mans ſeruice) *is better than he that boaſteth himſelfe*, that is, which ſtandeth vpon his reputation, and yet lacketh bread, hath little or nothing to maintaine himſelfe withall: for bread is put here for all manner of neceſſarie prouiſion.

*Doct.* They deale with beſt diſcretion that yeeld themſelues to a low ſtate when God calleth them to it.

It is the propertie of fooles either to rage at pouertie when it commeth vpon them, or to brag againſt it, or to fall down vnder it: whereas wiſe men will beare it with patience, and ſtoope to it in humilitie, and yet reſiſt it with great diligence. It was a grace that the Scripture commendeth in *Iacob*, that notwithſtanding the honour and worthineſſe of his father *Iſaack*, and grandfather *Abraham*, yet when he could no longer bee in ſafetie from his brother *Eſau*, in his fathers houſe, he betooke himſelfe to bee an hireling to his vncle *Laban* in another countrey. It was a vertue very eminent in *Moſes*, that being trained vp in his youth like a Prince in the Court of a great King, he could debaſe himſelfe in his middle age to be a ſheepheard to a ſtranger of farre inferiour place and degree. And it was the praiſe of *Naomi* that when ſhe was a rich wife and full, ſhe could thankfully vſe her wealth and fulnes: but when ſhe was growen to be a poore widow and emptie, ſhe would take ſtate no longer vpon her, but laid downe all titles, to her very name whereby ſhe was called.

Ruth 1. 20, 21.

*Reaſons.* 1. Firſt, it teſtifieth the lowlineſſe of a mans heart, to ſubmit himſelfe to Gods hand, when he can debaſe himſelfe, as he hath debaſed him; and the contrarie argueth pride and ſtubbornnes, when they will ſtand higher than he will haue them.

Secondly,

Secondly, they may comfortably repaire to God for ſupplie of their wants and bleſſing, when they ſerue his prouidence, and diſdaine not to be ſeruiceable in a calling, whereas the others refuſing to yeeld obedience to him, can haue ſmall hope to be accepted of him. 2

Thirdly, they that applie themſelues to labour for their liuings, doe eate their owne bread, and are profitable to others; whereas thoſe ſtately idle perſons are driuen to put their feet vnder other mens tables, and their hands into other mens diſhes, and to bee burdenous by borrowing and ſhifting, whereſoeuer they come. 3

Fourthly, they that are their owne ſeruants, take the way to better their ſtate, and to be Maſters of others, as *Iacobs* example and daily experience ſheweth, and is promiſed as a reward in the 24. of this Chapter. But thoſe of an high minde which denie a low port, and all painfull meanes of maintenance, too meane for men of their worth; are declining and ebbing, and likely to decay more and more, till they come to the bottome of want and penurie. 4

Reproofe, firſt of them that diſſemble their eſtate, pretending great riches, when they are preſſed with grieuous pouertie: and deſiring to be eſteemed wealthie, when they know themſelues to bee needie. This extremitie on one ſide, and the contrarie on the other, the holy Ghoſt doth cenſure in the chapter following: *There is that maketh himſelfe rich, and hath nothing: and that maketh himſelfe poore, hauing great riches.* Secondly, of ſuch as being ſunken in neceſſitie, and all men ſee them ſticking faſt in miſerie, doe yet face out the matter and take as much vpon them as if they were of great place and abilitie, ſome in regard of parentage; ſome of former ſubſtance, now waſted and conſumed; ſome of offices that they haue borne in time of their proſperitie; ſome of perſonages that they haue ſerued, or to whom they preſently belong: and ſome of trim apparell onely, and that is alſo yet vnpayed for. *Vſe.* 1. Prou. 13. 1.

Inſtruction, that euery man ſhould deale according to equitie and iuſtice, in giuing the more allowance and countenance to them that are worthier perſons. Sure it is that the Lord doth not 2

miſtake when he himſelfe aſſigneth to men their places, and teacheth vs whom to ſet before as the better, and whom to put after as the inferiour. Now ſithence he doth preferre the poore, deſpiſed, induſtrious, laborious, and giueth his voyce for their precedencie; why ſhould wee giue titles to ruffians, and royſters, and idle companions, that haue nothing in them of grace and goodnes, of knowledge or learning, of arte or skilfulnes, of wealth or ſubſtance, nor the moſt of birth or parentage, why ſhould wee make theſe ſuperiours to the others? why ſhould we make our ſelues guiltie of their pride, by feeding their vaine humours, and acceſſarie to their preſumption, in conſenting to their arrogant aſpirings? Is it well done to defraud thoſe of their right whom God approueth of and commendeth, and ſo to diſcourage them in their good waies, and to yeeld more than right to them whom hee reproueth and vilifieth, and ſo to animate them in their euill?

Verſe 10. *A righteous man regardeth the life of his beaſt: but the mercies of the wicked are cruell.*

THE purpoſe and drift of theſe words tendeth to this, that euery godly and righteous man is alſo mercifull: and that no wicked perſon can poſſibly haue any true pitie or compaſſion in him. *A righteous man*, euery one that feareth God and is faithfull, *regardeth the life of his beaſt*, his loue and kindneſſe and good dealing is ſo plentifull to men, and eſpecially thoſe which depend vpon him, and be of his charge, and at his finding, that it floweth ouer alſo to the cattell, and creatures which hee oweth or vſeth, or is put in truſt to looke to, or hath opportunitie offered to preſerue from hurt or periſhing. *But the mercies of the wicked*, thoſe actions and waies of theirs which carrie the faireſt ſhew and colour of mercie, *are cruell*, haue crueltie mixed therewith, either in purpoſe, or manner or euent inſuing thereupon.

*Doct.* Mercie is to be ſhewed not onely to men, but to the vnreaſonable creatures alſo. As all creatures doe taſte of, and liue by the abundant liberalitie and bountifulnes of Gods hand, ſo would he

he haue them to feele by ſenſe, though they cannot diſcerne it by reaſon, that there is alſo care for them and compaſſion in his children. Why did he forbid to kill the damme when they had taken away her yong ones, but that he would haue it knowne, that he alloweth not crueltie and wrong to be offered ſo much as to the ſilliest birds? The reſtraint that was of eating of blood, when the beaſts were dead, declared that he would not haue tyrannie exerciſed on them whiles they are aliue. Leuit.17.10.

Firſt, let vs conſider that God hath made them all, and his they are, and he is good vnto them, and prouident for their preſeruation, as the Prophet ſaith, *Thou, Lord, doeſt ſaue both man and beaſt.* Pſal.36.6. And therefore we ſhall both ſhew our ſelues vnlike to him, and hurtfull to his, if we offer abuſe and wrong vnto them. *Reaſons.* 1.

Secondly, he hath lent them to vs for our help and ſeruice, and by their trauaile are we eaſed, or by their fleſh, or fleece, or milke, or increaſe, or ſome other profit made of them are we relieued, beſides the delight that many of the miniſter to vs: and therfore how vnthankfull ſhould we be to him that dealeth ſo kindly with vs, how vnfaithfull to him that committeth his goodes to our hands, how vniuſt to them that are ſo ſeruiceable to vs, if we be not carefull that they haue good vſage? 2

Thirdly, if we vſe our ſelues in conſcience and compaſſion to looke well to our beaſts, wee cannot but deale more merciſullie with men: but if we accuſtome our ſelues to bee cruell to them, wee ſhall in time grow to bee fierce and violent towards our brethren. 3

Inſtruction, that wee ſhould not onely exerciſe good husbandrie in keeping our cattell well, that they may doe vs the more worke, or carrie vs the better, or liue the longer, or be more ſaleable, but alſo to practiſe the dutie of righteouſneſſe in obeying God herein. That is certaine that many wicked men regard the liues of their beaſts and prouide plentie of foode for them, yet not in mercie but in couetouſneſſe: not in loue to the creature, or him that made it; but in deſire of their owne gaine and lucre: for they reſpect their horſes, ſheepe and oxen, more then their neighbours ſtate, or their owne ſaluation; but theſe are not the righteous men which are here commended: A preſident and exam- *Vſe.* 1.

ample of faithfull regard of his beast, is to be found in the seruant of *Abraham*, in his iourney to *Nahors* citie, in Aram Naharaim, who when he was come to the place, whither hee was sent, tooke
Gen. 24. 32. order first that the Camels should bee vnsadled, and meated, and haue litter put vnto them, and then dealt in the busines wherein hee was imployed, and after these things tooke his owne refection.

2 Reproofe of those that requite euill for good to the poore beasts that trauell for them, and vnder them, whom they deale as hardly with, as if they were rather noisome & hurtfull vnto them. Many waies they oppresse them, as with burdens too heauie, with stripes too many, with spurring too often, with pace too swift, with iourneyes too long, with meate too little, with dressing too slender &c. The Lord hath inioyned them perpetuall silence, neuer to complaine of these things, though they groane vnder them, otherwise if they had libertie of speech and reason to lay open their grieuances, the wronges which they sustaine would appeare to bee great, and many. And yet in an other sort, more extremitie then this is vsed against other sorts of creatures, and that is when men make a sport of making them miserable: when it is a pleasure to put them to paine: when it is a pastime to behold their torment and tearing. This proceedeth not of a tender heart: this is not the worke of righteousnesse: this delight will leaue no comfort behind it. Haue our sins in *Adam* brought such calamities vpon them, and shall we adde vnto them by crueltie in our owne persons? Haue our corruptions been a cause of that fiercenesse that is in many of them one against another, and shall we solace our selues in seeing them execute it? God forbid. If wee doe, it may iustly returne vpon our selues, their teeth, or hornes, or pawes assaulting vs, or else Gods owne hand by some other meanes, reuenging their wronges.

*Doct.* 2. *But the mercies, &c.* All the fauours that sinfull men shew, doe commonly tend to some hurt.

The Lord doth often vse the wicked as instruments of good vnto his children; but though they do the worke, yet he sheweth the mercie: their hands and tongues are not so much directed by their owne loue and kindnes, as by his purpose and prouidence.

dence. *Iacob* was not ignorant of this point, when he refused the curteous offer of *Esau*, who would either himselfe haue been a companion to him in his way, or left some of his seruants behind to gard him. When *Saul* pretended most readines to bring *Dauid* to preferment by matching him with his daughter, his meaning was to bring him to destruction by putting him into the hands of the Philistins. Gen.33.12. 13.15. 1.Sam.18.17.

First generally true mercie is peculiarly appropriated to the godly as all the fruites and graces of the spirit are; and therefore the semblance of it in the wicked proceedeth from the flesh, and is euermore counterfeit, corrupt, and fleshly. *Reasons.*1

Secondly in special, they vsually transuert their fauor & iustice, shewing mercie where they should exercise seueritie, and practising crueltie where they should shew mercie. *Saul* was so pitifull that he would spare *Agag*, though God commanded to slay him; but *Dauid* should haue died if hee could haue caught him: And hee made no scruple in killing fourescore and fiue Priests of the Lord in one houre; it was a small matter in his eyes, to smite a whole citie of innocent people with the edge of the sword, both man and woman, both child and suckling, besides all their cattell. And so *Ahab* gaue *Benhadad* King of Aram to know, that he would vse him like a brother, and graunt him his life, whom God appointed to be handled like an enemie, and put to death: but he dealt with the Prophets of Israel in an other manner, and slew as many of them as he could come by. Euen the very sparing of notable wicked persons, is a decree of crueltie against the righteous, as they be iniurious to the liues of the sheep and lambs, that permit the wolues and foxes to liue and breede among them. 1.Sam.22.18. 19.

They vse to peruert, and ouerturne all their good turnes, at one time or other, with mischiefe or hurt either outwardly, or to the soules of them whom they make beholden to them. 2

Instruction not to be like to them, or to conforme our selues to their waies. Let loue be in our rebukes: let compassion bee in our stripes: let our seueritie be mercifull; but neuer let our mercies be cruell. 2. Not to cast our selues into their hands in hope *Vse.* 1.

that

that they will be fauourable to vs; if their meekenesse, if their mildnes, if their mercie bee cruellie, how immeasurably cruell will their malice, and wrath, and rage and furie be?

2 Reproofe of those that neuer exercise any other mercie then that which is here condemned. They are very carefull for their familie and people that they shall haue refreshing, and libertie for their sports, and delights, but it is onely on the Lords day, when it doth more harme to their soules, then good to their bodies; for they will spare them no time from their owne workes, when they may recreat themselues with a good conscience. Others are as forward in giuing; they will be like to *Iob*, not to eate their morsels alone, but the poore shall euer haue part with them: but the choise of their almsmen is altogether vnlike to *Iobs*; for hee relieued the fatherlesse, and widowes, and poore impotent persons; and they bestow vpon a filthie generation of idle vagabonds, whom *Iob* chased from the very presence & companie of people.

Iob 30. 5.

Others will declare how pitifull they are, by helping men that are in destresses, and therefore if they might haue their wills, there should not be so many punished. But whose impunitie doe they seeke for? whom would they haue to escape either whip, or goale, or gallows? not such as be vniustly accused: not such as be ouertaken with small infirmities: not such as shew themselues most penitent for their faults; but those that are ordinarie, obstinate, and impudent malefactors, and most pernitious and grieuous offenders. These are as full of compassion as the Iewes were of mercie, when they cried to *Pilate, Barrabas, Barrabas*, let *Barrabas* liue and be deliuered.

Verse 11. *He that tilleth his land, shall bee satisfied with bread: but he that followeth the idle, is destitute of vnderstanding.*

HE *that tilleth his land*, which is industrious and faithfull to doe good in any honest vocation, *shall be satisfied with bread*, shall haue competencie of all things that are needfull for him: *but he that followeth the idle*, vaine fellowes, which giue themselues to no good trade or occupation, and is idle as they are, *is*

*destitute*

*deſtitute of vnderſtanding*, playeth the foole, and ſhall feele the ſmart and paine of it.

The oppoſition is, he that tilleth his land is wiſe, and ſhall bee ſatiſfied with bread: but he that followeth the idle, or is idle (for that is the meaning) is deſtitute of vnderſtanding, and ſhall bee filled with pouertie. So is the ſupplie made: Chap.28. 19.

The exerciſe of husbandrie is a good and commendable voca- *Doct.*1.
tion. He ſingleth it out, as a paterne or enſample of all the reſt, that if men labour in any worke that is no worſe than that, they ſhall be ſure that no exception can iuſtly be taken againſt it. Many exhortations tend to it; as, *Prepare thy worke in the field*, Prouerbs 24.27. Many reproofes and threatnings tend to it, as, *The ſlothfull will not plow becauſe of winter, and therefore he ſhall begge in ſummer*, Chap.20.4. Many promiſes of bleſſings are to that purpoſe, as, *Thy barne ſhall be filled with abundance*: Chap.3.10.

Firſt, it is the moſt ancient of all trades. God himſelfe aſſigned *Reaſons.*1
it to *Adam*, and *Adam* made choiſe of it for his eldeſt ſonne.

It is as much voide of guile and deceit as any, and very profi- 2
table and commodious. The labour of men is for good vſe in it; and the labour of beaſts is gainfull; as he ſaith, *Where none oxen are the crib is emptie, but much increaſe* commeth *by the ſtrength of the oxe*, chap.14.4. And in that reſpect there is a promiſe made vnto them, that they ſhall haue a part in mans plentie, and fare the better by mans welfare. *The oxen and the yong aſſes that till the* Iſai.30.24.
*ground, ſhall eate cleane prouender, which is winowed with the ſhouell and the fanne.*

It is neceſſarie both for Prince and ſubiects, and all ſorts of 3
people. *The abundance of the earth is for all: and the King conſiſteth* Eccle.5.8.
*by the field that is tilled.*

Some can liue without fleſh, and many without fruites, and more without fiſh, but none without bread. The Ægyptians were not without fruits and fiſh, in the yeeres of ſcarſitie, as it is probable, nor *Iacob* without cattell, as it is certaine, and yet through want of corne they were all in danger to periſh.

Incouragement to them whoſe trauell is in it, that they worke *Vſe.*1.
cheerefully. They are of as good note with God for their ſeruice, if they be faithfull, as others whoſe trades are more gainfull, and

better esteemed among men. The Merchants, and Goldsmiths, and Iewellers, and others of such places are not so often mentioned in the Scriptures as they be, nor animated with so many consolations as they are: the grand promises for blessing on their labours, is made to them in speciall, and the rest must deduct their comforts from thence by proportion.

2 Reproofe of them that disdaine this calling, scorning to be of it, or to put their children to it, as accounting, and calling them hindes, and clownes, and peasants, and contemptible persons, that be of that profession. It is a righteous hand of God vpon vs, that tillage is so much decaied, because it is no better regarded: and that there should bee so much detracted daily from the imployment of men, because there are so few men that are willing to be imployed in it. Notwithstanding it is their great sinne, as may appeare by the premisses, which doe what they can, for their parts, to defraud the land of so ancient, honest, profitable, and necessarie a trade and vocation.

*Doct.* *But he that followeth the idle, &c.* They that dispose themselues to idlenes, shall neither want example nor companie in it.

They shall haue al inticements and allurements to draw them to it, and hold them in it, so soone as they haue any inclination that way. They shall not be the first inuentors of that trade, but others haue vsed it before them, and diuers will practise it with them. They shall finde the ice broken to them, and a path beaten out for them, and all inducements to bring them into the snare.

*Reasons.* 1. First, there are very many that are giuen to this sinne, as may appeare by the manifold admonitions, rebukes and threatnings to them that liue in it. It is a sure rule to bee obserued, that when the holy Ghost doth deale often and largely against any euill, it is such as is heinous, and dangerous, and many are subiect to it.

2 Secondly, they are sociable and delight in companie, and take pleasure to be diuers of them together. Experience confirmeth this, and maketh it apparant and manifest. How many doe sit together at drinking, and quaffing, and surfetting? how many doe flocke together to vaine playes, and idle sports and pastimes? How many were wont to swarme together euery where, as in

ſundrie places they do ſtill, in that deteſtable courſe of wandring and rogiſhneſſe? It may ſeeme to haue been no delightfull habitation to liue in want and penurie and diſgrace in a ſolitarie wilderneſſe, and yet that was haunted by them, according as *Iob* teſtifieth: *They were chaſed foorth from among men: they ſhouted at them, as at a theefe. They roared among the buſhes, and vnder the thiſtles they gathered themſelues.* Iob 30.5.7.

Thirdly, they poyſon each others heart, when they come together, with ſuch ſpeeches, and exerciſes, as they are not eaſily reduced to any vertuous behauiour afterwards. 3

Admonition to looke to our ſelues, and our people, that the contagion of the ſocietie, perſwaſions, or examples of vnthriftie perſons, bring not either vs or ours to ioyne with them, or be like vnto them. Seeing the number of them is ſo great, our watchfulneſſe muſt be the more, that if wee may, we ſhunne their companie, if we may not, yet to take a preſeruatiue that we be not infected by them. Let this be remembred that though their number be great, yet there are none of them wiſe, and though they are preſently full of mirth, yet they will not long be full of wealth: and as they free themſelues from the paines that other men take, ſo they debarre themſelues from the plentie which others enioy, and fall into that want which others eſcape. *Vſe.*

*Is deſtitute, &c.* Euery idle perſon is fooliſh. Though ſome of them haue knowledge, and that more than the greater part of them that be laborious and diligent, yet God will not vouchſafe it the name of vnderſtanding, nor themſelues the credit to bee called wiſe men. The ſame that he affirmeth here, he doth ſtand to, and iuſtifie in another place, repeating againe the ſelfe ſame words: *I paſſed by the field of the ſlothfull, and by the vineyard of the man deſtitute of vnderſtanding.* And the conſequence doth alſo argue as much, when he ſendeth him to ſchoole to ſuch a ſimple Miſtriſſe to be taught, ſaying, *Goe to the Piſmire, O ſluggard: behold her waies, and be wiſe.* *Doct.* 3. Prou.24.30. Prou.6.6.

Firſt, true wiſedome is neuer ſeparated from faithfulnes in ones calling, becauſe it is euer ioyned with the feare of God, and the feare of God worketh in men obedience to the word of God, and *Reaſons.* 1.

the word of God teacheth euery man *to labour with his hands*, (or otherwise) *the thing that is good*, Ephes.4.28.

2 Secondly, the want and miserie hee plungeth himselfe into, doth shew that wisedome is away. For wisedome dwelleth with prudence, and maketh men prouident for themselues, their state and familie.

3 Thirdly, his conceitednes doth euict his follie: for, *The sluggard is wiser in his owne conceit, than seuen men that can render a reason*, Prou.26.16. And then ye know how the case standeth with him: *Seest thou a man that is wise in his owne eyes? there is more hope of a foole than of him*, Prou.26.12.

*Vse.* Instruction, to be affraid of so dangerous a sinne that bringeth so much mischiefe with it. What can be more hurtfull and pernicious than it is? What can bring a man into greater miseries? It draweth men into euill companie: euill companie will corrupt them with euill behauiour, and it, and euill companie, and euill behauiour will bring them into an euill state, and robbe them both of their wealth, & good wit. No theeues can do so much, no tyrants can make such a spoyle, no fire can burne vp and consume those things that it can. They doe no more but bereaue men of their money and substance as it doth, and it taketh away their wisedome and credit, as they doe not. When goods be gone, labour may get more, and friends may giue more to them that haue vnderstanding, or at least they shall haue peace in their hearts with God, and fauour with good men: but when vnderstanding is lost as well as their wealth, what shall become of them? They know not how to recouer their state: they know not how to beare their wants: they haue no consolation in God: they haue no countenance from godly men, they haue (continuing in that sin without repentance) no sure hope of saluation in heauen.

Verse 12. *The wicked desireth the defence of them that be euill: but the roote of the righteous giueth it.*

WHen the vngodly doe come into perils, and afflictions and troubles doe come vpon them, all their hope of helpe

helpe reſteth wholly in men, and thoſe not the godly which might direct them, or pray for them, but ſinfull perſons as bad as themſelues, whoſe fauour and power they truſt vnto, but in vaine, for they are deceiued by them: but the righteous are not or need not to be driuen to ſuch ſhifts, the Lord Ieſus Chriſt their roote vndertaketh their preſeruation, and doth not onely make a ſhew thereof, but effectually performeth it.

It is the propertie of ſinners one to relie vpon another. It was an ordinarie thing with the godly Kings and good people of Iſrael to preuent plagues and dangers by faithfulnes and obedience to God, and to remoue them when any came, by humiliation and prayer to him: and it was ordinary with the wicked Kings, and ſinfull people to procure plagues by rebellion againſt God, and to ſeeke remedie, by flying from him to his enemies. Sometimes they repoſed vpon Ægypt, as *Iſaiah* complaineth, and threatneth them for it, ſaying, *Woe vnto them that goe downe into Ægypt for helpe, and ſtay vpon horſes, and truſt in chariots, becauſe they are many, and in horſemen, becauſe they are very ſtrong: but they looke not vnto the holy one of Iſrael, nor ſeeke vnto the Lord.* Sometimes their confidence was *Aſſhur*, as *Hoſea* laieth to their charge: *When Ephraim ſaw his ſickneſs, and Iudah his wound, then went Ephraim vnto Aſſhur, and ſent vnto King Iareb: yet could hee not heale you, nor cure you of your wound.* *Doct.* Iſaiah 31.1. Hoſea 5.13.

Firſt they are ſenſuall, and looke with a fleſhly eie, and then there is great liklihood of helpe and ſuccour to bee found at the hand of many wicked men, becauſe their power ſeemeth ſo great, and their fauour ſo much towards ſuch as are like to themſelues. *Reaſons.* 1.

Secondly, God is an enemie to them, and they bee enemies to good men, and therefore they haue no expectation to be relieued of him, or to bee comforted by them. And this is alleaged as a cauſe why *Saul* conſulted with the witch, becauſe *the Lord anſwered him not, neither by dreames, nor by Urim, nor yet by Prophets.* 2. 1.Sam.28.6.

Thirdly, they haue prouoked God ſo far, ỳ he is purpoſed to execute his iudgments vpon them, & therfore they are left to themſelues, to take ſuch a way, as will worke them woe, but doe them no good. For it hath been alreadie declared in the former chap- 3

ter, verſ. 21. that though hand ioyne in hand the wicked ſhall not be vnpuniſhed. And this maketh them liable to the curſe that *Ieremy* denounceth, *Curſed be the man that truſteth in man, and maketh fleſh his arme, and withdraweth his heart from the Lord.* Ieremie 17.5.

*Vſe.* 1. Inſtruction to continue our faithfulneſſe, that God may continue his fauour and goodneſſe to vs. If we ſeeke him in our proſperitie, we ſhal find him in our aduerſitie: if we ſerue him in our beſt ſafetie, wee ſhall be preſerued in our greateſt perils: if our hearts be open to receiue his word, his eies will bee open to ſee our diſtreſſes, and we ſhall not need to ſue to the wicked men for aide and protection.

2 Reproofe of their folly which caſt themſelues into ſuch miſery, as that they cannot be ſafe without ſuch miſerable helpers. Euill men muſt fall themſelues, & how can they make other ſinners to ſtand? They muſt be condemned and executed, and can they ſet their cõpanions at libertie? A wretched caſe is that malefactor in, that hath no better friends than him that ſtandeth at the barre in gieues & bolts arraigned by him. It is as bad to haue the enemies ſword to pearce ones ſides without, as a ruinous houſe to fall on his head within. The ſeauen and twentie thouſand men whom
1.Reg.20 30. the wall fell vpon in Aphek, were in as bad ſtate, as the hundred thouſand that were ſlaine in the field. And it will appeare in the end, that all wicked men, when confidence is repoſed in them, are nothing elſe but ſwelling walles, and old rotten caſtles that are tumbling downe.

*Doct.* 2. *But the roote, &c.* There is no danger to them that grow by faith in Ieſus Chriſt. The talleſt cedars, and ſtrongeſt okes are not ſo faſt ſetled and firmely rooted, as is the loweſt Saint and weakeſt Chriſtian. In thoſe kind of trees, the roote cannot defend the braunches, nor bodie: the wind may breake off the boughes and armes, and the axe may cut downe the whole ſtocke without reſiſtance: but our root doth miniſter as much ſafetie as ſappe to the whole Church, and euery ſprigge of the ſame. No ſtormes and tempeſts, no force nor weapons ſhall ſeparate the leaſt of his from him, nor any way make ſpoile of them.

*Reaſons.* 1. Firſt, he drieth vp the ſpring and fountaine of all hurts and dangers,

dangers,and that is ſinne; the guiltineſſe of it is taken away by remiſſion,and the puniſhment by his ſuffring, and the power by his grace,& what then is the peril that we ſhuld ſtand in feare of?

Secondly, he maketh all his fruitfull,and the fruite is a fence to Gods trees, though mens bee more beaten and broken by cudgels and poles for that which groweth vpon them. 2

Thirdly, euery one of them that haue Chriſt for their roote, haue God the Father for their dreſſer and keeper: Ioh.15. And therefore if any thing bee hurtfull in them, he taketh it away: if any thing be wanting to them, he maketh ſupplie: if violence be attempted againſt them, he reſiſteth it. This happineſſe of the Church and vſe of particular Chriſtians doth God himſelfe ſpeake of,making profeſſion of his prouident care of them in the prophecie of *Iſaiah*, *Sing*, ſaith he, *of the vineyard of red wine. I the Lord doe keepe it: I will water it euery moment: leſt any aſſaile it, I will keepe it night and day.* 3 Iſai.27.2.3.

Fourthly, one eſpeciall part of the ſappe that Chriſt the roote of Chriſtians doth ſend vp to his branches, is the ſpirit of prayer, and that maketh their prayers fit to come vp to him, and hee maketh them meete to be preſented to his father: now then in all their troubles they will ſurely crie to him, and whenſoeuer they doe crie he will more ſurely heare them, and whenſoeuer he heareth them,he will moſt aſſuredlie helpe them. 4

Inſtruction, to trie in what ſtate we ſtand by the roote that we grow vpon. Euery man and woman,euery perſon that is diſcended from *Adam* is a braunch of a tree,either growing naturallie, as he was borne in the old ſtocke, and ſo hee is ſubiect to Gods diſpleaſure & iudgements; or els is ingrafted into Chriſt as being new borne,and ſo hath his part in Gods fauour and mercies. If we would therefore haue our harts at libertie, without dread of calamities and miſerie,we muſt draw all our ſafetie from whence we deriue our ſaluation,and that is from the Lord Ieſus our Sauiour, and our being in him, and growing in him,and communion with him. Externall meanes will not ſuffice to ſecure vs from hurts, without this inward medicine, and deliuerance from plagues by God owne hand will not comfort vs, without the reſpect of this cauſe. *Vſe.* 1.

Conſolation

2 Conſolation to them that be in Chriſt; as the Apoſtle ſaith to
Rom.8.1. the Romans, that there is no damnation to them, ſo the ſpirit ſaith here, that there is no danger to them: there is aſſurance that nothing ſhall keepe them from heauen and euerlaſting life, and here is a warrant that nothing ſhall hurt them in earth, and in this life. That godly gloriation which is vſed there, againſt the enemies of our ſoules, may fitly alſo bee vſed here againſt the enemies of our bodies: *If God be on our ſide, who can bee againſt vs?*
Rom.8.31.35. *Who ſhall ſeparate vs from the loue of Chriſt? ſhall tribulation, or anguiſh, or perſecution, or famine, or nakednes, or perill, or ſword?* Though Sathan and ſinners would, yet they can doe nothing againſt vs that ſhall bee for our hurt; and though God himſelfe can, yet he will doe nothing to vs, that ſhall not turne to our good.

Verſe 13. *The euill man is ſnared by the wickednes of his lippes, but the wiſe ſhall come out of aduerſitie.*

AS wicked men doe maliciouſlie abuſe their tongues to the hurt of others, ſo alſo many times they ouerſhoote themſelues ſo farre as that aduantage is taken of their words to their owne perill and hurt; as on the other ſide the godly doe often times helpe themſelues out of troubles by the wiſedome of their ſpeeches.

Doct.1. They that haue euill tongues doe moſt hurt themſelues with them. This point we reſerue to be handled in the ſixt and ſeuenth verſes of the eighteenth chapter, where will bee fitter occaſion to handle it more fullie.

Doct.2. *But the righteous ſhall come out, &c.* He is neuer deſtitute of a good helper in his troubles that hath a good tongue to deale for him.

Hee doth not here, onely ſet downe the aſſurance that ſuch as feare God haue to eſcape from their afflictions, but the meanes whereby they obtaine their deliuerance. God hath ordained troubles for his people to be tried with: and he hath appointed the iſſue out, aſwell as the entrance in: and their enemies malicious words doe commonly worke their moleſtation: and their

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owne Chriſtian ſpeeches doe vſually procure their peace and libertie.

Firſt, the wrath of thoſe that are incenſed againſt them, is thereby much abated, if not altogether pacified. If they bee not wholy implacable, and ſuch as haue caſt off all humanitie, milde and gentle ſpeeches will mitigate their diſpleaſure. *A Prince is pacified by ſtaying of anger, and a ſoft anſwere breaketh the bones:* Prou.25.15. *Reaſons.* 1.

Secondly, words of trueth being wiſely deliuered will very much grace a good cauſe, to the ſatiſſying of them that knew it not before, and the refuting of them that are falſe accuſers, and the winning of their fauours that for mercie were not ſo well affected to them. 2

Hereof we haue an example in the prophecie of *Ieremie:* The Prieſts and the Prophets accuſed him to the Princes and people, as a man deſeruing to be put to death for his doctrine. Hee hath libertie to ſpeake for himſelfe; hee proueth his innocencie, by ſhewing the author of all that he preached, and that was God giuing him a commaundement to publiſh it: and the end that they ſhould repent and amend their waies, and ſo eſcape the iudgements threatned. The Princes, and all the people preſently were on his ſide, they ſpake for him, they cleared him of that crime which was charged vpon him, they iuſtified his faithfulneſſe in his miniſterie. *This man is not worthie to die* (ſay they) *for he hath ſpoken to vs in the name of the Lord.* Ierem.26.16.

Thirdly, with godly and gracious words of prayer, godly men preuaile with God himſelfe, as it was ſaid of *Iacob*, and therefore no aduerſitie can preuaile againſt them. For this, and the vſes thereof ſee the eight verſe of the former chapter, where are almoſt the very words of this preſent text. 3 Gen.32.28.

Verſe 14. *A man ſhall be ſatiat with good things by the fruite of his mouth, and the recompence of a mans hands ſhall God giue vnto him.*

A *Man ſhall be ſatiate with good things, &c.* That is, ſhall bee recompenced by the Lord with great bleſſings, for the good

vſage of his tongue, when hee ſpeaketh to Gods glorie, and the edification of his brethren, or for iuſtice and equitie in the behalfe of them that are wronged, and iniuriouſlie dealt with. Hee will ſtirre vp men to loue him, and ſhew kindnes vnto him, yea thoſe ſometimes which be of great place and able to doe him much good, as it is ſaid, *he that loueth purenes of hart, for the grace of his lippes the King ſhall be his friend:* Prou.22.11. But eſpeciallie hee himſelfe will beſtow vpon him all good things for this life, and graces for euerlaſting life, and glorie for life euerlaſting. *And the recompence, &c.* And ſo ſhall euery mans good workes bee alſo rewarded with mercie and fauour, though there bee nothing in them of deſert and merit.

*Doct.* Nothing ſhall be vnrewarded that is well performed in word or deede. This hath bin alreadie handled in the eighteenth verſe of the former chapter vpon theſe words, *He that ſoweth righteouſneſſe, ſhall receiue a ſure reward.*

Verſe 15. *The way of a foole is right in his owne eies; but he that heareth counſell is wiſe.*

THe *way of a foole*] The wicked courſe and behauiour of a ſinfull perſon, whom God reputeth a foole: (for it is not vnderſtood of an idiot, as may appeare by the compariſon betweene them, cap.26.12. *Seeſt thou a man wiſe in his owne conceit, there is more hope of a foole than of him*) *is right in his owne eies*; hee liketh of it, and alloweth himſelfe in it, as ſafe and good for him to walke in, and conſequently reiecteth all good aduice, and admonitions: *But hee that heareth counſell,* which ſuſpecteth his owne iudgement, and receiueth direction from them that are wiſe, and godly, and obeyeth it, he *is wiſe,* ſheweth the wiſedome, that he had before, and learneth more, and findeth the fruite of it by good effect.

*Doct.* The worſe any man is, or doth, the leſſe he ſeeth his euill. They that commit the moſt ſinnes, haue hope that they ſtand guiltie of feweſt: they that fall into the greateſt tranſgreſſions, imagine that their faults be the ſmalleſt: they ỳ ſinke into the deepeſt dangers, doe dreame of greateſt ſafetie: they that haue longeſt continued

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in rebellion againſt God, of al others, for the moſt part, are ſloweſt to repentance. Theſe are they which are ſpoken of when it is ſaid, *there is a generation that are pure in their owne conceite, and yet are not waſhed from their filthineſſe.* Prou 30. 12. Obſerue it in all ſorts of ſinners, and it will be found that the greateſt offenders are furtheſt from all remorſe for their offences: Papiſts and Idolaters doe thinke they merit at Gods hand, and deſerue heauen for their idolatrie and ſuperſtition. Perſecutors and tyrants, as our Sauiour ſaith, Ioh. 16. 2. will thinke they doe God ſeruice, when they kill Chriſtians, and Miniſters, and Apoſtles. If men of ſmaller infirmities bee admoniſhed of things amiſſe in them, it is not very hard to bring manie of them to a ſight of their offences, inſomuch as they will acknowledge themſelues to be faultie, & thanke him that reproueth them; but when notorious adulterers, or drunkards, or blaſphemers be rebuked, what diſtemper, what rage, what furie doe they breake out into? as though a moſt grieuous indignitie were offered vnto them; as though moſt innocent men were vniuſtly defamed.

Firſt, they are ouerwhelmed with the miſt of darkneſſe, and couered with the ſpirit of error and ignorance: the diuell hath blinded their minds (as the Apoſtle ſaith) that all iudgement and vnderſtanding is taken away from them. And S. *Paul* teſtifieth, that when he was in the worſt caſe, he knew nothing but that hee had been in the beſt: before he knew the meaning of the law, hee made noe doubt but that he had been aliue: but when hee ſaw the ſenſe and iuſtice of the commandement, he found ſinne to be aliue, and himſelfe to be dead: Rom. 7. 9. 10. *Reaſons.* 1. 2. Cor. 4. 4.

Secondly, the cuſtome of ſinning doth obdurate the heart, and depriue it of all ſenſe of the ſinne, though neuer ſo hainous: the feeling faileth, and luſt with a greedy deſire of ſatiſfying it ſelfe in euill, increaſeth euery day to a fulneſſe. 2

Thirdly, the text it ſelfe yeeldeth a reaſon why they haue ſo good opinion of their owne waies, becauſe they are led with pride, and heare not ſuch as might ſhew them any thing to the contrarie. They haue allowance by word and practiſe from fooles like to themſelues, and their own carnall reaſon doth conſent 3

ſent with them: and then they take to proceede from enuie, whatſoeuer is ſpoken againſt them.

*Vſe.* 1. Terror of conceited perſons, which proceede on wilfully in their wicked waies, and no man can reclaime them. They are wiſe, they trow, hauing liued ſo long, to know what is good for themſelues, they are not now to learne how to ſerue God, and be ſaued. But the wiſe God calleth them fooliſh men: he ſaith that their ſtreight way is crooked, and their ſafe way is dangerous, and that the iſſues thereof are the waies of death. When they take themſelues to be happie he iudgeth them miſerable: when they looke for welfare, he threatneth woe: when they preſume of a bleſſing, he pronounceth, and will accordingly execute a curſe.

Iſa.5.21. Hereof ſpeaketh *Iſaiah, Woe to them that are wiſe in their owne eies, and prudent in their owne ſight*; They make themſelues odious to God, they flie from repentance, they ſhun reformation, they run into deſtruction.

2 Confutation of them that imagine a good meaning towards the ſeruice of God and their owne ſaluation to be ſufficient, whatſoeuer their meanes be which they vſe. If their mind be to haue their way good, they thinke it cannot be euill: if there bee a willingneſſe that it ſhould be ſtreight, they reſt aſſured that it will not be crooked. But if the opinion and willes of men be of ſuch force to rectifie their waies, what way would not leade to ſaluation? We ſhewed before that ſuch as murdered the Saints of God thought to ſerue God, and bee ſaued by it. Why then was not *Paul* in as good caſe before his conuerſion as afterwards? *Men*

1.Tim.6.5. *of corrupt minds, and deſtitute of the trueth, thinke that gaine is godlines*, why ſhould not many courtious men then enter into the kingdome of heauen? A traueller in his iourney may wander out of his way, notwithſtanding his meaning to goe right, if he will make no enquirie for it. And no trade or ſcience is attained vnto, by the willingneſſe of hauing, but of learning of it.

3 Conſolation to them that are not confident of themſelues to leane on their wiſedome, but enquire for direction in the booke of God, and take aduiſe and counſell from his ſeruants. Though the world deeme them ſillie ſoules and voide of wit, yet the Lord eſteemeth

eſteemeth them for wiſe and men of vnderſtanding. And ſo will he proue them, and ſo ſhall they find, and ſo by euent in the end ſhall others well perceiue.

Verſe 16. *A fooles wrath is made knowne the ſame day: but a prudent man couereth ſhame.*

THe meaning of the holy Ghoſt is not to condemne all kind of anger: for it is one of the powers of the ſoule, which God created as an ornament in man: and godly anger is a part of Gods Image in him, and a grace commended in *Moſes*, *Elias*, *Eliſha*, and our Sauiour himſelfe, and he that is alwaies altogether deſtitute of this doth prouoke God to bee angrie with him, for want of zeale and hatred of ſinne. But it is a paſſionate anger that is here reproued, which is not a power of the ſoule but an impotencie. He that conceiueth the other is an agent, and doth a ſeruice to God: but hee that is moued with this, is a mere patient, and ſinne hath in that caſe preuailed againſt him. Now it is ſaid that a foole will be knowne the ſame day, that is, ſuddenlie and ſpeedily, as ſoone as he is prouoked, he will ſhew it by outcries, reuilings, or threatnings, or other ſuch like ſignes of choller: But a wiſe man, ſo farre as his wiſedome worketh, and his naturall corruption and infirmities breake not out, will hide ſhame, that is, will ſuppreſſe his anger, and paſſe by the iniuries offered to him, and not diſgrace himſelf by returning reprochful ſpeeches to him that hath done him the wrong.

They much bewray and lay open their folly that are giuen to be haſtie to anger. *Doct.*

God did ſee it before within, but now men ſhall alſo diſcerne it without: that which formerlie did lurke in the ſoule will breake out by this into ſight. It will ſhew it ſelfe in their countenance, in their geſtures, in their words, in their actions. And therefore it is ſaid that *the diſcretion of a man deferreth his anger: and his glory is to paſſe by an offence.* Prou. 11.12.

Firſt the originall and roote of this raſh and haſtie anger is ſinfull and euill: it proceedeth from the corruption of nature: it is the worke of the fleſh, and a limbe of the old man; Gal.5.20. *Reaſons.*

Col.3.8. That holy anger against ſinne and Gods diſhonour doth not come ſo eaſily, nor is ſo readie at hand; that muſt be labored for, and obtained by prayer and other godly exerciſes; and when there is cauſe of it, our fleſh is very vnwilling to entertaine it.

Secondly more ſpecially, pride and a hie minde that diſdaineth to beare any indignities doth kindle it, and cauſe the flame thereof to breake out ſo violently.

Thirdly for the manner thereof, it is inconſiderate and without all iudgement, taking thoſe to be enemies that are friends, and thoſe to be offences that are kindneſſes, and thoſe offences to be the greateſt that are the leaſt, and that to deſerue much blame and puniſhment which is to be paſſed by with ſilence.

Fourthly the effects of it are daungerous, as S. *Iames* ſaith, *that the wrath of man worketh not the righteouſneſſe of God*, Iam.1.20. And this ſcripture, that *he that is haſtie to anger committeth follie*, yea exalteth folly, Prou.14.17.29. as ſhall bee ſhewed more particularly in that place: And our Sauiour, that hee that is angrie with his brother vnaduiſedly ſhall bee culpable of iudgement. And he that ſhall raile with all and call his brother foole, ſhall be puniſhed with hell fire, Mat.5.22.

*Vſe.* 1. Inſtruction to vſe meanes that our hearts may bee ſtored with the wiſedome which is from aboue, that is peaceable and gentle. Let vs not rake in the ſinke of others mens faults to annoy our ſelues with the vnſauorie ſmell of them, and therewith to be defiled and made as vnſauorie to others. Hee that will take all aduantages of wronges done to him ſhall wrong his owne name with infamie: and he that couereth the ſhame of others in priuate iniuries, doth actually publiſh his owne praiſe, as the holy Ghoſt ſaith, *It is a mans glorie to paſſe by an offence: it is his honour* to ceaſe from ſtrife, Pro.19.11. & 20.3. Conſider how amiable and louely a grace this mildnes, this meekeneſſe, this long ſufferance and forbearance is: it declareth wiſedome, it winneth credit, it draweth loue, it pearceth their hearts, if any thing can, that are ſo ſpared, it bringeth comfort to our owne ſoules for the aſſurance of Gods mercie in pardoning of our ſinnes.

2 Reproofe of them that for credites ſake, becauſe they would not be counted fooles, will riſle into euery word that is ſpoken, and

and euery action that is done againſt them. And ſo to auoide the name of fooles, they will doe the workes of fooles, and to haue the reputation of wiſe men, they will practiſe that which is contrarie to wiſedome: they will ſhame themſelues in deſire of honour, and bring contempt vpon their owne heades, in hope to be much regarded. When they ſhew themſelues much diſpleaſed, it ſeemeth to them that they are much feared, and indeede they are much deſpiſed: great heate with offer of reuenge, they thinke will be imputed to great courage and magnanimity, but God and wiſe men aſcribe it to folly and debilitie. It is a certaine rule of truth, that he is moſt valiant, that is moſt patient: and ſo getteth the victory that ouercommeth euill with goodneſſe: And no conquerer is ſo mightie as he that ſubdueth his owne paſſions and diſtempered affections. For ſo doth the Lord himſelfe who is the fitteſt vmpiere in this and all other cauſes, ſet downe his award: *He that is ſlow to anger is better then the mightie man: and hee that ruleth his owne mind, is better then he that winneth a citie.* Rom. 12. 21. Prou. 16. 32.

Verſe 17. *He that ſpeaketh trueth, will ſhew righteouſneſſe: but a falſe witneſſe vſeth deceit.*

HE *that ſpeaketh*, ordinarily in his common ſpeech that which is true, *will ſhew righteouſneſſe*, that is, will carie himſelfe iuſtlie, and further righteouſneſſe with his teſtimonie, when hee ſhall bee publikely called thereunto. *But a falſe witneſſe*, a falſe man becomming a falſe witneſſe, *will vſe deceit*, will make a ſhew of trueth, and peraduenture vtter ſome part thereof, but with ſuch craft and cunning, as ſhall be contrarie to righteouſnes, and hurtfull to any good cauſe.

*He that ſpeaketh the trueth, &c.* They that vſe not their tongues to the trueth in priuate, can hardly be brought to deale truelie in publike. *Doct.* 1.

There muſt be as well a trayning of that to make it fit for equitie and iuſtice, as of the hands, and other parts of the bodie to make them skilfull in handling a weapon, and bearing of armes, and doing of other feates that belong to a ſouldier. As no man is meete to be made a publike perſon, and to be called to eminent

place

place either of magistracie or ministerie, that hath not before declared his worthinesse by shewing forth those vertues, and excellent qualities which the holy Ghost prescribeth in the scriptures: so likewise is not any competent for any worke that is publicke, vnlesse his former conuersation vpright and honest, commend him vnto it, but least of all if the contrarie be found common and ordinarie with him. The rule which our Sauiour giueth in another case, will hold as firmely in this. *Hee that is faithfull in the least, he is also faithfull in much: and he that is vniust in the least, is also vniust in much.*

Luk. 16. 10.

*Reasons.* First, the mouth of the man is the mouth of the mans treasure: that which he speaketh he best loueth: that which is most in the lippes, hath greatest place in the heart. If therefore the trueth be deere vnto him, he will assuredly shew it forth, when hee shall stand for that purpose before God, and his substitute, and doe so good a seruice of loue and pietie: but if hee haue any fellowship with falsehood, he will now take part with it, beeing voide of the feare of God, and affraide to displease man, and hauing so fit opportunity to gratifie his fleshly friends, and to procure thanks, and recompence to himselfe.

2 Secondly, no man exerciseth the truth at any time conscionably but by the spirit of trueth, and that directing mens hearts at other times in matters of lesse weight, will not faile them at their greatest neede, when they are to performe a duetie of so great importance: and so on the other side Sathan hath the disposing of their tongues that giue themselues to lying: he is their father, he teacheth them their trade, and tasketh them in their worke, and they be wholy at his commaundement: and who doubteth but that he will commaund them to be on his side, and to take against the truth so farre as the knowledge of the truth shall make against his practises?

*Vse.* Instruction, for them that would not fall to falsewitnesse bearing, that would not incurre the displeasure of God, and hazard the losse of their owne credit, that they acquainte themselues with true speaking in all their words, so as it may bee familiar with them when they are in any cause to bee disposed: that they deale soundly in the company of few, least they shew their falsehoode

falſehoode in preſence of many: that they hate all lying among the meaneſt, and thereby auoide it among the greateſt. 2. To iudges, and magiſtrates, and all miniſters of iuſtice, that they be very circumſpect, ſo farre as in them is, what manner of perſons they admit for Iurours, and Queſt-men to deliuer vp verdicts: or to be accuſers, or witneſſes, for giuing in of euidence: and well to ſift the teſtimonie of thē that are wont to faile of fidedelitie, leſt as they vſe to fill mens eares with vntruths, ſo they alſo defile the place of iudgement with periurie, and vniuſtice. How many righteous men may a few ſuch deceiuers turne out of the right way? what wrong may they offer, what hurt may they doe, what miſchiefe may they worke both in oppreſſing them that are innocent, and clearing of the wicked?

*Will ſhew righteouſneſſe, vſeth deceite, &c.* The ſpeaking of true words is no note of a faithfull man, vnleſſe it bee in due manner, and plaine meaning. *Doct.* 2.

Falſe witneſſes doe not alwaies vtter flat lies, and palpable vntrueths: for then they would be ſoone eſpied, and quicklie conuinced, and eaſily confuted: they would bee cenſured of euery man, and credited of no man: but their fraude is couered with a faire ſhew of veritie, as ſlips of copper appeare to be good coine, when they are gilded ouer. The promiſe of euerlaſting life is not giuen to all that ſpeake the trueth, but onely to them *that ſpeake the trueth in their hearts*, that is, in ſinceritie and vprightneſſe. Pſal.15.2. The diuell himſelfe did ſpeake that which was true, and euen the words of holy trueth to Ieſus Chriſt, when he ſaid that God had giuen a charge to his Angels to hold his people in their hands, that they ſhould not daſh their foote againſt a ſtone: but it was guileſully deliuered, a materiall part being ſuppreſſed, and the reſt peruerted to draw him to ſinfull preſumption. Matth.4.6. It was a true information that was giuen to *Saul* by *Doeg*, that *Ahimelech* the Prieſt had miniſtred both *foode, and weapon to Dauid:* and by the Ziphims that *Dauid hid himſelfe in the wood by them:* 1.Sam.22.10. & 23.19. It was a true informatiō that was giuen to *Nebuchadnezzar* by the Chaldeans, that *Shadrach, Meſhach, and Abednego would not ſerue his Gods, nor worſhip the image that he had ſet vp:* Dan.3.12. and it was a true information that was giuen to *Darius* by his princes, that *Daniel regarded*

Dan.6.13. *not the decree that he had ſealed, but made his petition three times a day:* but all theſe true informations were made by falſe men, of deceitfull lipes and malitious hearts for wicked purpoſes.

*Reaſons.* 1. Firſt, God heareth our words, beholdeth all our proceedings, he looketh to the heart eſpecially, and obſerueth likewiſe the manner of our teſtimonies, not onely what is vttered, but how much, whether all that ought to be, or more then ſhould bee, or the iuſt meaſure that is required, and onely they that can approue themſelues to him, for ſincerite and vprightneſſe, are to be reputed faithfull, and the reſt are but craftie diſſemblers.

2 Secondly, if true words alone would paſſe for currant without further reſpect of drift, and manner, thoſe things would be many times ſeparated which God would haue alwaies ioyned together, and thoſe things would be made oppoſite, which hee appointeth to be ſubordinate one to another: trueth is ottentimes ſpoken without loue that will peruert iuſtice and true dealing, and ſtirre vp oppreſſion and violence, as is to be ſeene in the former examples. But ſo it muſt not be, a breach muſt not be made among thoſe that are euer to be knit together with an vnſeparable bond of vnion. Ierem.4.2. *Thou ſhalt ſweare,* ſaith the Prophet, *the Lord liueth, in truth, in iudgement, and in righteouſneſſe*; that is, thou ſhalt truly, rightly, and righteouſlie profeſſe him, and take an oath by him, when thou haſt a cauſe, and calling to ſweare, and accordingly diſpoſe of all the reſt of thy ſpeeches.

*Vſe.* 1. Inſtruction ſo to order and guide our lippes in all that we ſay, that men may finde nothing but veritie in the matter which wee declare, and God may ſee nothing but ſincerite in the end which we propoſe. And ſo though we be ſifted, yet we ſhall not bee ſhamed: and though there bee accuſations (as the trueth muſt looke to be quarrelled withall) yet there will bee no conuictions, ſo long as an vpright heart doth cleere vs.

2 Reproofe of guilefull perſons whoſe trade is to be painters of bad cauſes. If any man haue ragged, torne, and rotten matters in hand, which euery honeſt man reiecteth, let him come to them, and they will ſet ſuch colours and pictures thereupon, as ſhall make them appeare very beautifull. But let them know that they ſhall make themſelues to be baſe, and God will bring ſuch cunning

ning deceiuers (as hee hath alreadie dealt with diuers æquiuocant ſophiſters) to ſhame and contempt.

Verſe 18. *There is that ſpeaketh words like the pricking of a ſword: but the tongue of wiſe men is health.*

THere is, a brood and companie of ſinfull fooles, *which ſpeake words like the prickings of a ſword*, that is, dangerous, and pernicious, which pierce deeper to the hurt of mens names and ſtates, then the edge and point of a ſword doth to ones bodie. But the tongue of the wiſe is health, their ſpeeches are holeſome, and helpefull both to themſelues and others.

No weapon is more hurtfull then a wicked tongue. Among all the complaints which the godly, and Gods owne ſpirit make againſt the wicked in the ſcriptures, they ſeldome complaine of any thing more then of their virulent and peſtiferous mouthes. It is ſaid of flatterers, *that their words are more gentle then oyle, and yet they are ſwords*: Pſal.55.21. It is ſaid of falſe accuſers, ſuch as *Doeg* was, *that their tongues are ſharpe raſors that cut* deceitfully, Pſalm.52.2. It is ſaid of falſe witneſſe bearers, *that they are like hammers, and ſwords, and ſharpe arrowes*: Prou.25.18. It is ſaid of all ſorts, and of euery one of them, *that their throate is an open ſepulchre: they haue vſed their tongues to deceit, the poiſon of aſpes is vnder their lippes*, Rom.3.13. *Doct.*1.

Firſt, they cauſe ſwords to be drawne, and bloud to bee ſhed, and men to be ſlaine, and much miſchiefe to be wrought. *Abimelech* and his brethren the Prieſts, were killed by the tongue. *Naboth* and his ſonnes were killed with the tongue. Our Sauiour Chriſt himſelfe was killed by the tongue, as *Peter* chargeth vpon thē that procured his death: *Him haue ye taken by the hands of the wicked, and haue crucified and ſlaine: you deſired a murderer to be giuen you, and killed the Lord of life*, Act.2.23.& 3.15. *Reaſons.*1

Secondly, the ſword, or any other weapon can onely hurt them that are preſent, and in place neere to it: but the ſtroke of the tongue will light vpon them moſt daungerouſlie that are abſent, and farre off: no place or diſtance can helpe againſt it: and one man may doe miſchiefe thereby to a great multitude. *Doeg* 2

with one breath destroyed the whole citie of Nob, both man and
1.Sam.22.19. woman, both child and suckling, and yet was not present at it. What a slaughter would *Haman* haue made throughout the whole Persian Monarchie, if the Lord had not wonderfully preuented it?

3 Thirdly, when men be assaulted with weapons, others will bee readie according to their power and opportunitie to succour and defend them, or to pitie them for the wrong and violence which they sustaine; but a malignant tongue causeth others to smite those whom it smiteth, either by reporting that which it affirmeth, or by beleeuing that which it reporteth.

4 Fourthly, the sword can onely wound the bodie, and take away the naturall life, and when the breath is gone the paine is ended: but a pestilent tongue may poyson the soule, and depriue men of euerlasting life, and bring vpon them perpetuall torments for euer.

*Vse.* 1. Admonition to be warie how we carrie our tongues, that they be safely put vp from doing of hurt, and neuer vnsheathed, but when we are to stricke at sinne, and to skirmish with Sathan. It is not good to make frayes with our brethren, and to draw vpon their names: If we cannot vse our weapons better, the Lord will binde vs to the peace, and take order that his people may goe more safely by vs.

2 Instruction to auoide the companie of such sinfull hackesters that are neuer without such deadly weapons. What can a Christiã doe or say, or omit, that will not set their tongues on worke? And how can they open their mouthes to speake with their tongues, but that they must needs spit venome? If they be angrie, their bitter raylings, and reuilings shall haue sharp points, & keene edges: if they be merrie, they will persecute with taunts and girds, & biting iests: howsoeuer they be disposed they will vomit our impious othes, and blasphemies, or such other corrupt speeches as will either bring griefe, or infection. 2. To be alwaies armed, and wel fenced against thẽ, because we shall haue necessary occasions diuers times to bee in presence with them. That therefore wee seeke protection from God by prayer, as the Prophet did, saying:
Psal.140.1.3. *Deliuer me, O Lord, from the euill man: preserue me from the cruell*

*cruell man: which sharpen their tongues like a serpent: adders poison is vnder their lippes.* And withall let vs put on innocencie: for that will repell their strokes, and ward them off, that they shall neuer hurt vs deadly. True it is that none are so much laid at, as they which are most blameless, the greatest accusations, and threatnings, and scoffes are against them: but yet they escape best of all others, because they are least liable to all those kind of cursed speakings.

*But the tongue of wise men, &c.* It is the propertie of good men to vse their lippes to doe good with them. This point hath been in some part, alreadie handled in the second clause of the sixt verse, and we purpose, if it please God, to stand more largely vpon it in the fifteenth chapter verse 4. where is saide that *a wholsome tongue is a tree of life.* *Doct.* 2.

Verse 19. *The lippe of trueth shall be stable for euer, and a lying tongue but for a moment.*

THe meaning is, that such as speake the trueth in vprightnesse will not varie in their talke, but tell the same tale againe, and be like to themselues in that which they shall say, whereas lyers be in and out, affirming and denying, and speaking contradictions in the same matter.

Onely true men are constant in their words. *Doct.*

They goe not from that which they haue well spoken, as they will not stand to that which they haue failed in, as *Iob* professed of himselfe, saying, *I will lay mine hand vpon my mouth. Once haue I spoken, but I will answere no more, yea twise, but I will proceede no further.* This caused the Apostle S. *Paul* so seriously to cleare himselfe of all lightnesse and vnconstancie, that the Corinthians should haue no suspition that with him should *be yea, yea, and nay, nay,* but that his promises, and preaching, and purposes were stable, and firme, and vnchangeable. Iob.39.37.38. 2.Cor.1.18.

First, their matter will helpe their memorie: for that which is trueth once, will be trueth euer, so that the same ground and subiect remaineth still to repeate, and reiterate, as was to bee spoken of at the beginning. *Reasons.* 1.

2 Secondly, the ſame ſpirit that worketh a loue & conſcience of the truth, wherby men are made to be true, doth neuer ceaſe to be the ſame: therfore as it ſeaſoneth the heart, & guided the heart at the firſt, ſo it will ſtabliſh the heart, and direct the lips to the end. For ſincerirtie, and vprightnes is of all things moſt durable, & leaſt ſubiect to alteration and change. And that S. *Paul* aſſigneth for a cauſe of his vnuariable conſtancy, that he minded not thoſe things which he did mind according to the fleſh, whereby there ſhould be with him, *yea, yea, and nay, nay.* 2. Cor. 1. 17. Now liers doe want all theſe helpes: they had neede to haue good memories, to remember what they ſaid before, leſt they tell a contrarie tale: for the thing related cannot put them in mind of it. For they vſe not to frame their words to the veritie of the matter which they ſpeake of, and to the ſeruing of their owne turnes, and effecting of their purpoſes, as he ſpeaketh of the vnconſcionable
Prou. 20. 14. chapman: *It is naught, it is naught, ſaith the buyer: but when hee is gone apart hee boaſteth.* A notable example of a wandring, vnregenerate, and vnſtable tongue ſpeaking contrarieties almoſt with the ſame breath, is to bee ſeene in that blaſphemous rayling *Rabſhakeh* whom the King of Aſhur ſent againſt Ieruſalem in the time of *Hezekiah*. In the entrance of his ſpeech hee ſeemed to bee all for the Lord: he taxeth *Hezechiah* for taking downe his hie places and altars, hee pretendeth obedience vnto him, as though he came thither by his commaundement, ſaying, *The Lord ſaid,*
Iſai. 36. 7. 10. 19. 20. *Goe vp againſt this land, and deſtroy it.* But before he had made an end, the Lord God of Iſrael, and the Idols of the Gentiles were all one with him. And therefore hee matcheth him with the conquered Gods of *Hamath*, and of *Arpad*, and of *Sepharuaim* &c. that ſeeing they could not deliuer their countries out of his hands, the Lord was not able to deliuer Ieruſalem from him. The
Pſal. 12. 4. lying miſcreants in the Pſalmes are bragging of the liberty and freedome of their tongues, being altogether ſlaues and drudges to Sathan, luſt, and lewdneſſe. Though it bee neuer ſo much againſt their knowledge, though it lie neuer ſo heauie vpon their conſcience, though it turne to their perpetuall ſhame and diſgrace, yet if the diuell, and the corruption of their hearts, will haue them to ſpeake, they muſt affirme it, if to denie, they muſt gaine-

ſay

ſay it, and eate their wordes, how vniuſtly and impudentlie ſoeuer.

Inſtruction to be aduiſed in our ſpeeches, that we vtter nothing but that which will become vs to ſpeake againe, and is lawfull to performe. It was a fault in *Dauid* to ſweare ſo peremptorilie that he would kill *Nabal*, his familie, and euery mothers child of them. It was his ſtabilitie in goodneſſe to breake off ſuch a purpoſe, and neither to ſay it againe, nor doe it at all. And it was the raſhnes of *Peter* to be ſo reſolute in promiſing that which was not in his power to performe. It was to be imputed to his conceitednes, and not conſtancie, that he ſtoode ſo ſtiffely in deniall of that which Chriſt told him would come to paſſe, and gaue no place therein to our Sauiour, but had the laſt word of him. It is wiſedome then to foreſee the euents that are like to follow: If wee affirme ought, let vs know our warrant and ground, that wee are able to proue it: if wee denie any thing, let the caſe be cleere that it be not prooued againſt vs: if we vndertake any thing, let vs be fully aſſured that it is lawfull, and meete, and poſſible for vs to doe it. And yet this ſufficeth not vnleſſe there be ſoundneſſe and ſincerrie without carnall reſpects in our ſayings. If the ende bee not good which is aimed at in ſpeaking, if the heart bee not faithfull of him that ſpeaketh, there can neuer bee any firmeneſſe or certeintie in the ſpeeches. *There is no conſtancie*, ſaith *Dauid* concerning the wicked, *in their mouthes, within they are very corruption.* For other vſes that might haue been made of this point, looke in the tenth chapter, and twentith verſe. *Vſe.* Pſal.5.9.

Verſe 20. *Deceit commeth to the heart of them that practiſe miſchiefe, and ioy to the counſellers of peace.*

DEceit commeth *to the heart, &c*, that is, ſorrow and griefe commeth to the hearts of them that plot miſchiefe againſt others by aduiſe, or attempt, when they ſhall finde themſelues deceiued in their deuiſes. But ſuch as vſe their thoughts and words to moue men to be at peace with God and their neighbours, and to walke in the way of peace and good proſperitie, ſhall not faile of the comfort of their faithfull and wholſome counſell.

Craftie

*Doct.* 1. Craftie persons shall feele the smart and woe of their owne subtill practises.

When their hearts take pleasure in inuenting of euill, they must be put to the paine to beare the burden of their euill inuentions. Vexation and mourning are not so meete for any, as for them that studie how they may vexe their brethren, and bring them to mourne. As we haue alreadie shewed that wicked workes
Chap. 11. 18. deceiue them that doe them, so for the same causes it will appeare that the warping of sinfull courses will turne to their hurt that imagine them.

*Reasons.* 1. First, their successe will not answere to their expectations, they shall faile of that which they fullie assure themselues of: as it is
Prou. 14. 22. said, *Doe they not erre that imagine euill?* Where the question is not proposed in way of doubting, but of certeintie, as of a thing that is cleere and manifest, and in no wise to bee gainesaied. Neuer any man of an hurtfull heart had his will satisfied, and his desire fulfilled to his contentment, and consequently according to his hope. Women commonly haue paine in breeding of child, and pangs in trauell, and comfort when they are deliuered: but malitious men conceiue ioy all the time that they goe great with their purposes, and most when they are bringing forth, and nothing but anger, and sorrow, and shame, when they see nothing but a mishapen monster, to be borne vnto them.

2 Secondly, though they come to preuaile for a time, and effect their purposes so as their hearts wished, yet somewhat hindreth their full comfort for the instant, as it did *Hamans*, and *Achabs*, and all be ouerturned in the ende, and themselues be ouerwhelmed therewith, as the case of *Haman* and *Daniels* aduersaries testifieth.

3 Thirdly, though they should worke their willes, and bring their purposes to passe and escape vnpunished, as long as they liue, yet because there is a iudgement to begin when life is ended, they are nothing the better for being spared so long. All their cunning, all their craft, all their wiles and shifting will not serue the turne to wind themselues out of the woe that is denounced against them, and the wofull punishments that shall bee executed vpon them.

Instruction

Inſtruction, that we vſe our thoughts and mindes to better meditations and ſtudies, then to nouriſh that by art which groweth too faſt by nature. Our fleſh breedeth an aptneſſe and inclination to doe euill, and become hurtfull, that we ſhall not neede to beate our braines about it, but rather haue cauſe with all carefulneſſe to bethink vs how we may ſhun and auoyd it. Let vs leaue that craft to the diuell which is the maſter and teacher of it, who laboureth to haue all to be his apprentices, and is moſt ready to informe euery one to be moſt expert and skilfull in that damnable trade of craftines. But neither himſelfe from the beginnig of the world to this day hath gained any thing by it, but deſperate madnes and vexation, beſides euerlaſting damnation to come, neither any one of his ſeruants of all the millions of millions that haue learned of him, hath in any one thing bin the better by it, but euery way vnutterablie the worſe. *Vſe.* 1.

Conſolation to the poore, ſimple, and harmeleſſe ſeruants of God, againſt whom the euill is intended, that it ſhall rebound vpon the authors, and returne vpon the practiſers, and neuer light vpon them. Many hearts are wiſhing their hurt; many minds are muſing how to worke it: many tongues are conſulting who ſhall doe it: many hands are readie to execute it: many mouthes inſulting ouer them that ſhall ſuffer it, and all this while the only watchman of Iſrael, and the keeper of the Church doth laugh them to ſcorne. He maketh their minds to miſtake that which they looked at: he maketh their hearts to bee filled with teares: he maketh their tongues to beſpeake their owne miſerie: he maketh their hands to be hurtfull to themſelues: and he maketh his people to ſit ſafely in the midſt of them. And this is truely affirmed by *Eliphaz*, and warranted by the ſpirit of God in the booke of *Iob*. *He ſcattereth the deuiſes of the craftie: ſo that their hands cannot accompliſh that which they doe enterpriſe. He taketh the wiſe in their craftineſſe, and the counſell of the wicked is made fooliſh. They meete with darkeneſſe in the day time, and grope at noone day as in the night. But he ſaueth the poore from the ſword, from their mouth, and from the hand of the violent man.* 2 Iob 5.12.13.

*But to the counſellers*] Holeſome counſell is comfortable to them that giue it, aſwell as profitable to them that take it. *Doct.*2.

If the tongue perſwade to that which is right, and the heart agree with the perſwaſion of the tongue, whatſoeuer ſucceſſe his words doe find in others, he is ſure to finde ioy and gladneſſe in his owne ſoule. The ſame bleſſing which *Dauid* pronounced vpon *Abigail*, for procuring of peace by her counſell, the Lord doth promiſe and pronounce, and will perfome to euery one whoſe affection and behauiour is like to *Abigails*. *Bleſſed*, ſaith hee, *bee thy counſell, and bleſſed be thou, which haſt kept me this day from comming to ſhed bloud.* And our Sauiour extendeth it generallie to all that labour vprightly, and in due manner to make peace, ſaying, *Bleſſed are the peace makers, for they ſhall be called the children of God*, Mat. 5.9.

1. Sam. 25. 33.

*Reaſons.* 1. Firſt, no man can ſoundly ſeeke to reconcile man to God, or one man to another, or giue direction for his neighbours welfare, vnleſſe he himſelfe be reconciled to God, and peaceable towards men, and haue Chriſtian loue in his heart; and thoſe graces are neuer ſeparated from holy comfort and gladnes. For the ſame ſappe that ſendeth forth the one, doth in like manner alſo yeeld the other, as the Apoſtle teſtifieth: *The fruite of the ſpirit is loue, ioy, peace, &c.* And in another place; *The kingdome of God is not meate and drinke, but righteouſneſſe, and peace, and ioy in the holie Ghoſt.*

Gal. 5.22. Rom. 14.17.

2 If their counſell be imbraced and followed, the good effect thereof with Gods bleſſing, will miniſter cauſe of reioycing, beſides thankes and kindneſſe which the parties holpen by their counſell will yeeld vnto them: as *Dauid* to *Abigail*, and *Naaman* to *Eliſha*, and the Iaylor and *Lydia* to *Paul*: Act. 16. 17. 33. 34.

3 Thirdly, though their aduiſe bee reiected, yet as *Iſaiah* ſaith, their reward is with the Lord, and they ſhall bee glorious in his eyes. And their faithfull dealing will bring them both comfort and praiſe, as *Ionathan* found in ſeeking to pacifie his fathers diſpleaſure vniuſtly kindled againſt *Dauid*.

Iſa. 49.4.5.

*Vſe.* Inſtruction to moue vs to be frequent and diligent in ſo good a ſeruice, whereof there is ſo much neede, and opportunitie of imployment (for worke may be had euery where) and ſo good a recompence for our trauell, as ioy is, and therefore Gods fauour, and therefore Gods bleſſing with eternall glorie. And what though

though there be oppoſitions againſt vs, as all faithfull peace-makers ſhall meete froward perſons that will bee vnpeaceable, yet if the God of peace be at peace with vs, and protector of vs, what cauſe haue we to ſtand in any feare? he would not promiſe vs ioy, vnleſſe he were reſolued to performe it: and he would not incourage vs to be ioyfull, vnleſſe our ſtate were ſafe and happie. And why then are we ſo timerous to ſpeake when wee ſee diſſenſion among equals, contempt of ſuperiours, oppreſſion of inferiours, ſinning againſt mens owne ſoules, and warre againſt the Lord himſelfe? Is it becauſe we would not giue offence? It is an offence to be ſilent at the offences committed againſt God, and the hurt that men doe to themſelues and their neighbours. Is it becauſe we would auoide trouble and diſpleaſure, and keepe our ſelues from griefe and ſorrow? The way to doe that is to pleaſe God, who can make them whoſe anger wee feare, to fauour vs, and be meanes of our peace and conſolation. But in counſelling of peace we muſt looke to theſe things, firſt, that we be iuſtly called to deale in that particular caſe, leſt *medling with the ſtrife that belongeth not vnto vs, we be as one that taketh a dog by the eares.* Secondly, that we make no attonement betweene wicked men in their wickedneſſe, as *Heſter* would not make *Haman* and *Aſhuerus* friends when they were fallen out: for how much concord had beene betweene *Haman* and the King, ſo much diſcord would haue bin betweene the King and the Church. So that in ſetting agreement betweene man and man, it is good to ſet variance betweene a man and his ſinne, and to leaue ſinfull men at variance, whoſe reconciliation doth tend to the diſhonour of God, and the hurt of his people. Prou. 26. 17.

*Vſe.* Reproofe and terror of makebates, which are counſellours of contention, of ſinfulneſſe, and wrong doing; which ſhall be handled in a fitter place, when we come to theſe words: *Without wood the fire is quenched, and without a talebearer ſtrife ceaſeth.* Chap. 26. 20. In the meane time let them bee admoniſhed that incenſe great men, as Landlords, and Magiſtrates, and Maſters againſt their poore, weake inferiours that liue vnder them. The Lord will heare their cries and groanes, not onely againſt the mightie ones that lay too heauie burdens vpon them, but alſo againſt all thoſe

that haue been meanes and cauſers of it. And be this remembred withall on both ſides, aſwell on their part that bee ſo eaſily perſwaded to rigour and crueltie, as of theirs that moue them to it, or incourage them in it, that this aduiſe doth not onely imbitter them againſt their vnderlings, who ſeeme to bee altogether in their power, but alſo imboldeneth them againſt their maker, who onely hath all power and ſoueraignetie ouer them.

Verſe. 21. *The puniſhment of iniquite ſhall not befall the iuſt: but the wicked are full of euill.*

AFflictions and corrections may come vpon the righteous, but no reuenging curſe tending to deſtruction, as if they were abiects. But the wicked are full of euill both of guiltines, and continuall practiſe, according to the corruption of their hearts, which the righteous are purged from, and therefore alſo of thoſe puniſhments which the righteous eſcape.

*Doct.* Though the Lord afflict the godly, as well as the godleſſe, yet it is done in farre different manner.

He commeth as a father in mercie and mildnes to the one, and dealeth as a Iudge, or rather an enemie, in wrath and ſcueritie with the other. He commeth with his pruning knife to cut off the ſuperfluous ſprigges and braunches of the one, and with a keene axe in his hand to hew downe by the rootes the ſtockes and bodies of the other. And this difference is ſpoken of in the foureteenth chapter of this booke, verſ. 32. *The wicked ſhall be caſt away for his naughtines: but the righteous hath hope in his death.* And this difference is ſpoken of in the ſeuen and twentith of Iſaiah, verſe 7. *Hath he ſmitten him, as hee ſmote thoſe that ſmote him? or is hee ſlaine according to the ſlaughter of them that were ſlaine by him?* That is, hath the Lord plagued Iſrael his Church and people in ſuch a grieuous manner as he hath deſtroyed their enemies? it is manifeſt he hath not. And this difference is ſpoken of in the eight chapter to the Romans, verſe 1. that *there is no damnation to them that are in Chriſt Ieſus that walke after the ſpirit,* as there is *to them that walke after the fleſh.*

Chap. 11. 31. The foure reaſons wherewith the laſt doctrine of the former chapter

chapter was proued, doe euidently confirme this point: and therfore to auoide prolixitie, and vnneceſſarie repetitions, wee referre the reader to that place.

Inſtruction, to labour to be vnlike to ſinfull men in behauiour, as we are deſirous to haue a better condition. Let vs ſet our ſelues as enemies againſt the dominion and kingdome of iniquitie, as they doe yeeld themſelues to be ſubiects and ſlaues vnto it: let vs ſeeke to cleanſe our ſelues from all filthineſſe both of the fleſh and ſpirit, and be filled with the graces of the holy Ghoſt, and the fruites of the ſame, as they are full of ſinnes, and vnrighteouſneſſe. *Vſe.* 1.

For the wicked not to conceiue the better of their owne caſe, nor the godly to like the worſe of theirs, becauſe externally all things ſeeme to happen alike to both ſides: for there cannot bee ſo great a diſparitie betweene any earthly things, though neuer ſo contrarie one to another, as there is betweene their eſtates, notwithſtanding that in ſhew and appearance they are alike. 2

Verſe 22. *The lying lippes are abomination to the Lord: but they that deale truely are his delight.*

THe ſenſe is plaine enough of it ſelfe, if the ſupplie bee made of that which is vnderſtood in both the clauſes. The Lord abhorreth lying lips, that is, thoſe perſons that abuſe their lippes to lying, which will alſo bee falſe in their deedes: and hee is well pleaſed with them that deale faithfully, which will likewiſe bee true in their words.

Euery lyer is a loathſome perſon, God doth neuer hate any thing that is not hatefull, and that muſt needes bee odible which hee abhorreth, and eſpecially when it is abomination, which is in hie degree abominable vnto him. And that hee is ſo affected towards lyers, his owne word in other places doth teſtifie. As when he ſaith in this booke, *Theſe ſixe things doth the Lord hate: yea his ſoule abhorreth ſeuen: the haughtie eyes, and a lying tongue, and the hands that ſhed innocent bloud, &c.* Yee may know by their companions among whom they are marſhalled, what account he maketh of them. And ſo in the reuelation of S. *Iohn*, *Doct.* Prou. 6. 17:

he declareth his deteſtation of them by reckoning vp their follow-
es, and deſcribing their grieuous puniſhment. *The fearefull*
Reuel.21.8. *and vnbeleeuing, and the abominable, and murtherers, and whoremongers, and ſorcerers, and idolaters, and all lyers ſhall haue their part in the lake, which burneth with fire and brimſtone, which is the ſecond death.*

*Reaſons.* 1. Firſt, nothing is more contrarie to the nature of God, who is infinitely true, and trueth it ſelfe, then guile and falſehood is. And nothing maketh men more like to Sathan, and workers of his will, then lying. So our Sauiour told the wicked vnbeleeuing
Iohn 8.44. Iewes: *Ye are of your father the diuell, and the luſtes of your father ye will doe. He abode not in the trueth, becauſe there is no trueth in him. When he ſpeaketh a lie, then he ſpeaketh of his owne: for hee is a liar, and the father thereof.* It is his mother tongue, and natiue language to lie; when he vttereth any true ſentence it is but borrowed, and that alſo he cannot truely deliuer, without groſſe deceit and diſſimulation.

2 Secondly, lying is a worke of the old man, and that which mis-
Col.3.9. becommeth the children of God, and lyers ſuch as giue themſelues vnto it, are vnregenerate, and as yet the children of wrath and ſubiect to damnation.

3 Thirdly they are iniurious to them whom they miſ-informe, making them to beleeue errors, and many times, many euill conſequents inſue vpon it.

And therefore the Apoſtle exhorteth all that are effectuallie regenerate, *to caſt off lying, and to ſpeake euery man trueth vnto his*
Eph 4.25. *neighbour, becauſe we are members one of another.*

*Vſe.* 1. Inſtruction, to worke vpon our owne hearts ſo, as that we comming alſo to hate lying, God may loue vs for trueth, and not haue vs in deteſtation for falſehood. If we cauſe him to abhorre our lippes for our vntrueths to men, he will abhorre our prayers and thankeſgiuing, and whatſoeuer ſhall proceede out of our lippes to him. And it is not enough to leaue lying in reſpect of hereafter, but to lothe the ſinne of it that hath been committed by vs
Iob 42.6. heretofore. When *Iob* knew that his words were diſpleaſing to the Lord, though they were few, and onely raſh and vnaduiſed, and he himſelfe by error was deceiued in them, he abhorred himſelfe

ſelues and repented in duſt and aſhes: how much more then ought wee to doe it, which haue more prouoked God with innumerable falſe ſpeeches, and that knowingly and with purpoſe of deceiuing, and hee doth profeſſe that they haue been, and are abominable to him? And what though wee haue ſometimes kept our ſelues from blame by telling of lies? What though wee haue delighted others, and obtained fauour to our ſelues thereby? What though we haue made our gaine and commoditie of it? Will all this, if this were the winning of all the world, be able to counteruaile the high diſpleaſure of God, and the loſſe of his fauour, together with the forfaiting of our owne ſaluation? And hereby ſhall we know that we bee ſoundlie purged from lying, if we doe not onely forbeare to lie, but bee vtterly vnwilling that any other ſhould tell a lie for vs. For that is the note of a righteous man that he *hateth lying words*, as well as forbeareth to ſpeake them. And they ſhall bee ſhut out of the kingdome of heauen together, which loue, and which make lies, Reuel. 22.15. Prou. 13.3.

Conſolation, to them that loue the trueth and exerciſe it: the ſame God that hateth liers ſo deadly, is as well pleaſed with true men that affect, and practiſe that which he loueth ſo dearely. Be it therefore that they are maligned for ſaying that which true is, and haſt not onely purchaſed euill will, but hard dealing, and that at their hands which ſeeme to be able to beare downe all before them; yet know and remember that God maketh account of thee: for thou art his delight: and thoſe that bee his fauourites ſhall find his fauour effectuall againſt all aduerſaries, for ſafetie and protection. 2

*But they that deale truely, &c.* That trueth which is acceptable to God conſiſteth both in ſpeaking, and doing. *Doct.*

Nothing can pleaſe him but the image of that which is in him, and the ſtreames which flow from him, as doth this reall and operatiue trueth, and not that which is verball and in word onely.

This is teſtified of the Lord Ieſus Chriſt the deerely beloued ſonne of God, who is propoſed to vs for a perfect example to imitate, *that he did no wickedneſſe, as no deceit was found in his mouth.* Iſa. 53 9.

Firſt,

*Reasons.* 1 First, his word in many places doth commaund both [illegible] equally, and no where doth dispence with the want of either.

2 Secondly, his spirit doth infuse both, and that inseparablie, and maketh euery man that hath attained to the one to be able to vse the other. That which S. Iohn setteth downe in a more generall manner doth strongly confirme this particular point. *If anie man sinne not in word, he is a perfect man and able to bridle all the bodie.* His meaning is not that some bee absolute without sinne in word, and perfect, without infirmitie in goodnes: but that many be gracious without sinfulnesse, though they haue their slips, in speeches: and sincere, without wickednes, though they haue their frailties, in behauiour.

3 Thirdly, both are infallible, and essentiall fruites of regeneration: and the Apostle doth perswade vs thereby to declare our selues to be of the number of the saints, and faithfull, saying; *Cast off lying, and let him that stole, steale no more,* Ephes. 4. 25. 28.

4 Fourthly, both are required of them, that would know, and manifest themselues to be naturall members of the Church in this life, and inheriters of saluation in the life to come. *Lord,* saith
Psal. 15. 1. 2. *Dauid, who shall dwell in thy Tabernacle? who shall rest in thy holy mountaine? He,* saith God, *that walketh vprightly, and worketh righteousnes, and speaketh the truth in his heart.*

*Vse.* 1. Instruction, 1. if we would haue the constant credit of honestie among men, or the comfort of it in our owne soules, or the allowance of it in Gods presence, that wee bee not more smooth in words, then faithfull in workes: that men may not more beleeue vs to be true in speeches, then the Lord shall discerne vs to bee trustie in actions.

2 Not to be ouerhastie to receiue their reports, whom we are able to conuince of vnfaithfulnes in behauiour. If God giue vs a caueat to looke to them, and beware of them, if he commend none to vs for credible, but such as are righteous, why should wee set light by his certificate, and be credulous to hearken to sinfull persons? especially sithence of all others, they are most readie to fill mens eares with pernicious and hurtfull informations.

Verse

Verse 23. *A prudent man concealeth knowledge: but the heart of fooles publisheth foolishnesse.*

A Prudent man, he that is of good discretion, and hath learned to be wary and circumspect, concealeth knowledge, not that he shutteth it vp altogether, without any vse or benefit of it to others: for that were contrarie to the profession which the Prophet maketh of that wherein euery godly man ought to follow him; *I haue not hid thy righteousnesse within my heart, but I but I haue declared thy trueth and thy saluation; I haue not concealed thy mercie and thy trueth from the great congregation.* Psal.40.10. And that were contrarie to the testimonie which is giuen of wise men, chap.15.7. *The lippes of the wise doe spread abroad knowledge.* But he will obserue all good circumstances of speaking, that it be in time and place, when good opportunitie doth require it, and good effect is like to bee wrought by it. And contrarie wise the heart of a foole which leadeth his tongue (for guide it doth not) doth set the tongue on worke either to vtter bad matter, or that which is good in bad manner, that euery man may see the folly which is in it.

It is not good for any man to speake as much, and as often as he can, but as often, and as much as he ought. Many wise sayings and sentences, are inserted by the spirit of God into this booke, to teach men how to be heedfull for the obseruation of this rule. As when it is said, that *the tongue of the wise vseth knowledge aright*; Chap.15.2. And that *a foole powreth out all his mind: but a wise man keepeth in till afterwards*; Chap. 29.11. *Doct.*

First, this sparing of speech, when men reserue themselues for fit occasions, and only vtter that which serueth for vse, doth giue a cleere testimony of a minde that is stored with vnderstanding and iudgement. And this reason our text in hand doth offer vnto vs, when it is said, that a wise man hideth knowledge, as a foole on the other side doth exercise the contrarie. Wee deeme them not the most thriftie husbands and wealthiest men that will locke vp nothing in their coffers, nor keepe any thing close in their purses, but carrie al their monie in their hands, and shew it to euery commer by; and so doe they that haue no more matter within their *Reasons.* 1.

hearts, then all the ſtanders by ſhall heare their lipes deliuer.

2 Secondly, it is a point of humilitie to bee ſilent in modeſtie, as pride, and conceitednesse maketh men desirous to heare themselues speaking.

3 Thirdly, their words are so much more desireable, and better accepted as they are rare, and few, and seasonable. *How good is a word in due season?* saith the Scripture. *And a word spoken in his place is as apples of gold vpon pictures of siluer.* The ointment that is close kept in a boxe wil yeeld a sweter sauour when it is powred out, then that which is continually open. And wine fresh from the vessell hath a better relish, then that which was drawne long before there was neede of it, or any to drinke it.

Prou. 15. 23.
Prou. 25. 11.

*Vse.* 1. Instruction, to learne moderation and keepe measure in speaking, vnlike to them that be talkatiue and exceede too farre in multiplying of words. What though it be true that we say, and so we know, and are able to proue it? Doth euery trueth beseeme euery time? Should all men alwaies bee speaking all that they know? It would bee a great meanes to hinder the increase of knowledge. Some be talking when they haue more neede to heare; some be teaching, when they haue more neede to learne: and many wrong themselues, and them that are present, in not giuing place to others that are more sufficient and better able to speake. So did not *Elihu*, he preferred his elders, though not his betters, before himselfe. Hee would not open his mouth before his turne came, and that he saw *Iob*, and his three friends to swerue out of the way on both hands.

Iob. 34. 4. 5. &c.

2 Reproofe of those that destinate all their speeches, and that in the ministerie of the Gospell, to the setting forth of their owne praises. It may truely be said of many, that they preach not Christ so much as themselues, contrarie to the faithfulnesse of *Paul*, who preached not himselfe, but the Lord Iesus Christ. Their chiefe labour is not to win glory to God, and men to saluation: but credit to themselues, and men to the admiration of their gifts and learning. This they principallie aime at, that all may be affected with their elocution; that al may see the fruit of their wits; that al may discerne of their skill in the tongues: that al may witnes their paines in reading: that all may wonder at their depth of iudgement.

ment. If thoſe be things that their hearts doe chiefly deſire, wee muſt conclude of them that their hearts doe publiſh fooliſhnes.

Verſe 24. *The hand of the diligent ſhall beare rule: but the deceitfull ſhall be vnder tribute.*

THe *hand of the diligent*, that is, diligent men who vſe their hands, or other members of their bodies, or elſe their minds to ſome honeſt and profitable trauell according to their calling, *ſhall beare rule*, and attaine to ſome good place of eſtimation. But idle perſons whom want and other occaſions draw to deceitfull courſes to ſhift for themſelues, as wee haue ſhewed in the fourth verſe of the tenth chapter, ſhall be made vnderlings, and brought into ſubiection and ſeruitude.

They which are laborious and faithfull in meane places, doe take the way to riſe to an higher degree. *Doct.*

True it is that diuers attaine not to ſuch greatneſſe as others doe, and yet be no leſſe diligent then others are, but the Lord maketh their inferiority a ſtep towards their heauenly aduancement: and they are not without eſtimation in that low eſtate: and God ſeeth their fruite to bee better, and their comfort to bee more there, than if they were raiſed vp to higher preferment. Otherwiſe, they that ſerue God in what place ſoeuer, are ſure to grow greater. The Scripture propoſeth examples hereof, and ſheweth how the point hath been verified in former ages. *Iacob* at the firſt ſet himſelfe to ſeruice, and was at the commandement of an other man, but at the laſt, being painſul and true, he was able to keep ſeruants himſelfe, and other men were at his commandement. *Ioſeph* when hee came into Ægypt was bought and ſold as a poore bondman, but being faithfull in euery place that hee came into, hee was promoted in euery place that hee came into. When hee was a ſeruant, when hee was a priſoner, and eſpecially when he was Prince. *Dauid* had once the charge of a flocke of ſheepe, and thereof was not a little heedefull: but afterwards hee had the leading of an armie of men, and laſtlie, was exalted to the throne of a glorious kingdome.

Firſt, promotion is from the Lord, and hee ſetteth vp, and putteth *Reaſons. 1.*

teth downe, according to his owne will. And therefore when he hath fitted men to authoritie, by humbling them with labour, he aſſigneth their places wherein they ſhall ſtand, and by his prouidence preferreth them to the ſame: ſome to bee Magiſtrates, ſome to be Captaines, ſome to be Miniſters, ſome to be Maiſters, ſome to bee Stewards, ſome to haue one office, and ſome another.

2 Secondly, the hand of the diligent maketh rich, and riches cauſe them that are wiſe and honeſt to be put into authoritie, and imployed in the townes and places wherein they dwell: or at leaſt they grow to be houſekeepers and beare rule in their owne families.

3 Thirdly, painefulneſſe with wiſedome and faithfulneſſe doth cauſe great perſonages to looke after them. They entertaine them into ſeruice: they put them in truſt with their affaires: they giue countenance vnto them: and they many times are meanes of their riſing and preferment. And in this ſenſe is that ſaying: *Thou ſeeſt that a diligent man in his buſineſſe ſtandeth before Kings, and ſtandeth not before the baſe ſort*; Prou. 22. 29.

*Vſe.* Reproofe of their follie that are aſhamed and diſdaine to take any paines vnleſſe it be in ſeruing of ſinne and luſt, and thereto they make themſelues ſlaues and drudges. And what is it that meaneth them to ſuch niceneſſe, that they will not voutchſafe to put their hands to any worke, or ſet their mindes to ſeeke for knowledge whereby they may bee fit for ſome good profeſſion? The feare of contempt: the doubt that they ſhall bee little regarded, if they applied themſelues to ſuch a baſe kinde of life. It is not according to their birth and bringing vp, to ſpend their time in labour, or ſtudie: it will bee a hinderance to their preferment that they looke for. But will they thus contrarie the word of God, and croſſe the trueth of his holy ſpirit? Will they ſay that diligence doth make men contemptible, when he ſaith, the diligent hand ſhall beare rule? will they ſay that idlenes doth bring men to promotion, when he ſaith, that the idle ſhall be vnder tribute? He will as well croſſe and contrarie them In their ſtate, and deſires, and make them feele his words to be true. Who ſeeth not what beggerie, and want, and miſerie, they caſt themſelues into? Are they not driuen to ſell away, and depart

depart with that inheritance and patrimonie which their parents haue left them? Are they not compelled to borrow and ſhift, and to ſincke deepely into debt? And it is a true prouerbe, that *the borrower is ſeruant to the man that lendeth.* For further vſe of this point, ſee the fourth verſe of the tenth chapter, in the application of the ſecond doctrine. Prou.22.7.

Verſe. 25. *Heauines in the heart of a man doth bring it downe: but a good word reioyceth it.*

HEauines of heart, that is, ſuch ſorrowes or feares, as are not godly, and effects of faith, but proceeding from infidelity, or carnall reſpects, eſpecially being exceſſiue, doth bring down the heart, not humbling it kindely, ſo as pride may be taken away, but either filling it with diſcouragement, or diſtemper, againſt which the Prophet wreſtled with ſundry conflicts: *Why art thou caſt down my ſoule, and art vnquiet, or tumultuous within me?* Pſal.42.5. Now withall he preſcribeth the remedie whereby this diſeaſe of hurtfull ſorrow and penſiuenes may be cured, and that is with good words. For the comfortable ſpeech of a friend, but eſpecially the holeſome word of God, declaring the remiſſion of ſinnes, and the fauour of God, expelleth the heauines of the heart, and refreſheth it with ioy and comfort.

Immoderate griefe doth turne men to great hurt and annoyance. As fleſhly mirth doth much corrupt mens minds, and ſtirre them vp to vanitie; ſo worldly ſorrow doth greatly weaken their hearts and dull their ſpirits, whereby they are hindred from the performance of many good duties. And ſo much is meant in that place, where it is ſaid that by the ſorrow of the heart, the mind is heauie. When *Ioſhua* was inclining to too much feare and diſcomfort, for the loſſe of his men at their going vp againſt Ai, and the euill conſequents that were likelie to follow, the Lord would not ſuffer him to giue place thereunto, ſaying, *Get thee vp: wherefore lieſt thou thus vpon thy face?* He tooke notice, and gaue a cenſure of this inward affection of his heart, ſomewhat exceeding meaſure, by the geſture of his bodie. *Doct.* Prou.15.13. Ioſh.7.10.

Firſt, the health and ſtrength of the bodie is thereby impaired *Reaſons.* 1.

and the life it ſelfe is many times ſhortned by that meanes. *A ioyfull heart cauſeth good health, but a ſorrowfull mind drieth the bones*, Prou. 17.22. It pearceth to that which is within, and bringeth weakeneſſe vpon the ſtrongeſt parts.

2 Secondly, ſuch as are oppreſſed with cares and griefe are made vnmeete for the ſeruices of God, who indeede doth require feare, but commaundeth likewiſe to reioyce with trembling. Pſal. 2. 11. How can they call vpon God in any feruency, when deadnes hath wholy poſſeſſed them? How can they be thankefull, and offer acceptable praiſes to God when they are voide of al ioy and cheerefulneſſe? And how can they attend vnto his word, when their thoughts are altogether buſied in the contemplation of their owne miſerie? The meſſage was very comfortable which *Moſes* brought to the Iſraelites in Ægypt, when the Lord told them, that he *would deliuer them from the burdens and bondage of the Ægyptians, and would take them for his people, and be their God, &c.* but it is ſaid they *harkened not to him for anguiſh of ſpirit, and cruell bondage*, Exo. 6. 9.

3 Thirdly, it maketh men leſſe diligent and profitable in their callings, whether it be in their ſeuerall trades, or in places of ſuperioritie to gouerne, or of inferioritie to obey.

4 Fourthly, it bereaueth them of the benefite and comfort of any Chriſtian ſocietie wherein they are neither apt to doe good, nor receiue good. It taketh away their cheerefulnes: it diſableth their tongues of ſpeaking fruitfully: it ſtoppeth their eares from hearkning attentiuely: their preſence is not very delightfull to others, and the companie of others is not much regarded of them.

*Vſe.* 1. Inſtruction, 1. to preuent this worldy ſorrow by preſeruing of godly ioy, and that is by keeping the peace of a good conſcience with an vpright heart, and holy behauiour, either ſhunning of ſinne that we runne not into it, or ſoundly ſorrowing for it, when we haue committed it. Looke how much innocencie and ſinceritie any man hath, ſo much comfort his heart ſhall inioy, and according to the meaſure of guiltineſſe there will bee an inward, ſecret biting griefe and fearefulneſſe.

2 When anguiſh and ſorrow, when feare and troubles aſſault vs ſo ſtrongly that we cannot repell them, let vs then obſerue that holie

holy counſell which God, that can make it effectuall, doth offer here in this place vnto vs, and that is to haue a recourſe to faithfull comforters. He ſendeth vs to them, he incourageth vs to go, he aſſureth vs of ſucceſſe, hee hath alwaies performed, that neuer any was left vnholpen, that ſought helpe at his hand according to this his direction. *Elihu* ſpeaketh of this to *Iob*, that when a man is ſtriken with ſorrow vpon his bed, and griefe of his bones is ſore, ſo that his life cauſeth him to abhorre bread and his ſoule daintie meate, that his fleſh is conſumed, and his bones chatter, and his ſoule draweth to the graue, and his life to the buriers, yet a faithfull meſſenger of God, one of a thouſand deliuering his meſſage faithfullie from God, will heale all this in them that giue credit to him, and ſet them in as good caſe as euer they were before. For God which can doe all things and formed all things, hath vndertaken to giue ſuch a bleſſing to the words of his ſeruants, and chiefly them by whoſe miniſterie he ſpeaketh to his own people. *I create* (ſaith hee) *the fruite of the lips to bee peace*, peace, that is, (true, perpetual, and moſt conſtant comfort) *vnto them that are far off, and to them that are neere: for I will heale him*. Hereof the keeper of the priſon, whom *Paul* and *Silas* conuerted, had happie experience, and thereby was preſerued from deſtroying himſelfe. Hereof three thouſand at once, whom *Peter* conuerted, had happie experience, being deliuered both from their feares, and ſinfulneſſe.

Iob. 33. 19 &c.

Iſai. 57. 19.

Act. 16. 28.

Act. 2. 37.

3 To collect all good arguments whereby wee preuaile againſt our dread and ſorrowes that grow from our afflictions and troubles. As who impoſeth them vpon vs but the Lord? And to what end doth the Lord ſo impoſe them, but in mercie and wiſedome, as a moſt skilfull and faithfull phyſition, for our profit? Haue not our betters endured more, and yet were beloued and bleſſed of God both for the preſent, and afterwards? Haue not we deſerued farre greater iudgements, euen deſtruction it ſelfe, and is it much if wee bee onely ſcourged ſo fauourablie with ſuch ſmall ſtripes of eaſie rodes, by a louing father who doth prepare vs thereby to ſo great comfort and glorie?

Verſe

Verſe 26. *The righteous is more excellent then his neighbour: but the way of the wicked will deceiue them.*

THe righteous, that is, euery godly man who hath attained to vprightnes, though not to perfection of righteouſnes, *is better then his neighbour*, is better beloued, and graced of God, and more eſteemed of godly wiſe men, and hath that in him which maketh him more commendable then any other that is vnrighteous and ſinfull; and ſo his way is anſwerable to his hope. But the wicked deſiring, and ſeeking, and expecting a more excellencie aboue others, are notwithſtanding contemptible, and grow in time to be contemned, and ſo their way deceiueth them.

*Doct.* Grace maketh good men to be the worthieſt perſonages. As they goe before all the vnregenerate in vertue, ſo they go beyond them in honour: and as they exceede them in pietie, ſo they ſurmount them in excellencie. The teſtimonie which the Prophet giueth of them to God himſelfe, by the inſpiration of Gods ſpirit, doth make this manifeſt. Pſalm. 16. 3. *My goods*, ſaith he, *extend not to thee, but to the Saints that are in earth, euen to the excellent: all my delight is in them.* And *Iſaiah* ſpeaking of the ſame ſort of people, though neuer ſo meane and poore, ſaith, Iſa. 4 5. *that vpon all the glorie ſhall be a defence.*

*Reaſons.* 1. Firſt, in regard of their condition in this preſent life they haue all prerogatiues, and preferments. By parentage euery one of them is Gods child: By dignitie they are all Kings: by inheritance, they haue title to heauen and earth: their foode is heauenly manna: their clothing is the righteouſnes of Chriſt: their attendants are the holy Angels: what ſhould wee ſpeake of other things, wherein one man is wont to excell many others, and thereby waxe glorious and become renowned? Who is wiſe beſides them? who elſe hath any true fortitude in them? doe not all others in their follie bring ſhame vpon themſelues? Hath not Sathan ſubdued, and as it were trampled them vnder his feete? They are dealt with as bond men, and put to the fowleſt workes of impietie, and falſehood, luſt, and lewdnes, and of all kinde of iniquitie.

Secondly,

Secondly, in reſpect of their ſtate that ſhall bee in the life to come, which by no compariſon can bee ſufficiently expreſſed. They ſhall haue perfect happines, and bee made like vnto Ieſus Chriſt, more excellent and puiſſant, then the moſt glorious Angels. When all the wicked ſhall be brought to the fulnes of contempt: when ſhame ſhall couer them: when they ſhall be troden downe as the mire in the ſtreetes. Micah.7.10.

Inſtruction, to labour for excellency by thoſe meanes whereby we may be made excellent, and that is by growing godly and religious. This way will not faile to effect it, and none other courſe without it, will be of any force to bring it to paſſe. Men may bee very wealthie, and ignominious: they may haue gorgious apparell, and be contemptible perſons: they may be honourablie diſcended, and yet without al honour. To conclude, neither ſtrength of armes, nor eloquence of tongue, nor ſharpeneſſe of wit, nor beautie of face, nor comelines of ſtature, nor boldnes of courage, nor any other externall thing, or gifts of minde vnſanctified, can ſo adorne and ſet forth one, as that thereby he may truely bee reputed for a man that is praiſe-worthie. *Vſe.*1.

Reproofe of ſuch as of all others moſt vilifie and contemne them that are moſt gracious and godly. Which make them (according to S. *Pauls* ſaying) as the filth of the world, and the offcourings of all things. Which make leſſe reckoning of them that are truely religious, then of the duſt which they ſweepe out of their houſes, and caſt to the dunghill. They had rather haue their children and friends to bee Beare-wards, or chimnie-ſweepers, then mortified and faithfull Chriſtians. How different is their eſtimation from the teſtimonie of the holy Ghoſt? And therefore how little grace of the holy Ghoſt is wrought in their hearts? 2 1.Cor.4.13.

S. *Iames* condemneth it for a haynous offence to haue a baſe opinion of the godly, and to put them behind wicked rich men for their pouertie: how grieuous then is their ſinne which contemne and loath them and put the vileſt before them, for their pietie? But one thing let them know, and that they ſhall in time to come both ſee and feele, vnleſſe in due time before, they ſee their fault, and feele godly griefe for the ſame, that they ſhall Iam.2.3.

neuer inherit glory with the righteous in heauen, that be deſpiſers of them in earth. Nay not ſo onely, but God doth condition with them that would haue an habitation aboue with him, that *vile perſons muſt be contemned in their eyes, and they muſt honour them that feare the Lord.*

Pſalm. 15. 4.

The other clauſe of this verſe is the ſame in ſenſe, and almoſt in words with the eighteenth verſe of the former chapter, where it is ſaid, that *The wicked worketh a deceitfull worke*; and therefore we referre the reader to that place for the doctrine of it.

Verſe 27. *The deceitfull man roſteth not that which hee tooke in hunting; but the riches of the diligent man are precious.*

THe *deceitfull, &c.* That is a prouerbiall kind of ſpeech, ſignifying that they ſhall not inioy nor haue the benefit of that which they get by craft and falſehood. If the whole ſimilitude be fully ſet downe, the meaning will the better appeare. Euen as hunters many times when they take pray, yet taſt not of it, nor fare the better for it: (for dogges may eate it vp, or ſome other occurrent may fall out to depriue them of it, as many lets come betweene the mouth and the morſell) ſo vniuſt and deceitfull men, though they attaine to wealth and riches, may bee aſſured that they ſhall neuer haue any ſound profit or comfort by them. Where by the way, may be ſeene the different end of the hunting that was vſed in thoſe daies, and of this which is practiſed of many in our times. They made it an exerciſe for profit, & thereby, as it may appeare, prouided foode for themſelues, and the families wherein they liued, as is to be ſeene in the example of *Eſau* himſelfe, who vſed to bring home veniſon to his father. But it is ordinarie now with diuers to beſtow a great part of their time to hunt meerely for pleaſure, without any commoditie. They voluntarilie defraud themſelues of the pray which they take, their houſeholds haue not the better cheere by their hunting, but the worſe. They conſume themſelues, and waſt their goods, and impouerish their wiues and children, by following their ſports, and neglecting their eſtate: by feeding ſo many dogges, as that thereby they faile both of care and abilitie to prouide for their people. *But the*

*the riches of the diligent are precious*, that is, thoſe things which they that are both faithfull and induſtrious doe gaine and get by lawfull meanes, ſhall doe them good, and ſerue for their comfort.

Euill meanes of getting may bring goods to mens hands, but not to their vſe. *Doct.*

Riches may come according to their deſire, but either not to tarrie with them, or not to doe them ſeruice, ſo that they will turne to a vexation at their departure, or to clog & burden them whiles they remaine. *As the Partridge layeth egges, which ſhe hatcheth not:* ſo, ſaith *Ieremy*, *he that getteth riches, and not by right, ſhall leaue them in the middeſt of his dayes, and at his end ſhall be a foole.* All deceitefull perſons fall into that abſurditie, which by our common prouerbe is derided; they count their chickens before they bee hatched, ſo ſoone as they haue egges in their neſt, they conclude of a brood of comfort and happineſſe, which God hath concluded that they ſhall neuer obtaine. *Achan* hunted after the conſecrated gold, and ſiluer, and execrable garment; but albeit hee caught them he roſted them not, but was burnt himſelfe, with all his, and whatſoeuer he had before. Ierem.17.11. Ioſh.7.15.

The Amalakites which ſacked Ziglag, and tooke the ſpoile of the citie, with *Dauids* wiues and ſubſtance, were proſperous hunters in ſhew at the firſt, yet they roſted not their pray, but prouided it for *Dauids* vſe, and *Dauid* dealt with them, as with beaſts that are hunted into the net.

Firſt, the vſe and comfort of all things proceedeth onely from Gods gift and bleſſing, and ſtandeth not in the meere getting, and poſſeſſion of thē: and all deceitfull perſons both in a generall reſpect, becauſe of their wickedneſſe, and in a ſpeciall regard for their fraudulent and guilefull behauiour, are ſubiect to malediction, and to be curſed in euery thing that they deale in, or which belongeth vnto them. *Reaſons.* 1.

Secondly, though the vngodly haue many times power and abilitie to increaſe their goods, yet the vſe and fruition of al good things is appropriated peculiarly and intayled to the righteous, for whom the wicked are ſet on worke, and not for themſelues. 2

And ſo much doth the holie Ghoſt expreſſelie teſtifie: *Surely*

*to a man that is good in his ſight, God giueth wiſedome and knowledge, and ioy: but to the ſinner he giueth paine to gather, and to heape vp to giue to him that is good before God*; Eccleſ.2.26.

*Iob* ſpeaketh to the ſame purpoſe, ſaying, *Though hee ſhould heape vp ſiluer as the duſt, and prepare rayment as the clay, hee may prepare it, but the iuſt ſhall put it on, and the innocent ſhall diuide the ſiluer*; Iob 27.16.17.

*Vſe.* Admonition to withhold our hands from direption, that wee take not from others that which will turne to no good for our ſelues. Wee bring griefe, and peraduenture alſo want vpon them, but we bring ſinne with greater ſorrow and miſery vpon our ſelues: it may bee their hindrance, but it will bee our owne vndoing, vnleſſe we leaue off and repent, and as much as wee are able, make reſtitution. So that our pray will not onely not come to our diſh, but deuoure the reſt of our meate, which otherwiſe might be for our nouriſhment: and by this meanes our neighbour is hurt, our labour is loſt, our conſcience is wounded, our ſtate is curſed, our ſoules indaungered, and that which is worſt of all, our God is offended, and prouoked to diſpleaſure. And therefore let not other mens ſucceſſe in this vnthriftie manner of gayning, allure vs to follow the ſame trade with them, ſithence we foreknow the vnhappy euent that will fall out in the end. Though ſpoile and crueltie, though rapine, and robberie, though filching, and ſtealing, though gaiming, lying, falſehood, or any indirect courſes doe ſet vp men for a time, yet downe they muſt, and be driuen to confeſſe that all their ſinfull gettings were vanitie and loſſe, and all their vnlawfull commodities pernitious and hurtfull to them.

*Doct.* 2. *But the riches, &c.* Wealth well gotten by good men, is great in value, whatſoeuer it be in quantitie.

As the bread of deceit is ſweeteſt, ſo the riches of iniquitie ſeeme beſt to vnrighteous perſons: and ſluggards like nothing ſo well, as that which commeth with leaſt trauell, and without much paines taking. *Better*, ſay they, *is an handfull with eaſe, then two handfuls with labour and vexation of ſpirit.* And euery thing is a vexation of their ſpirit which putteth them to any paines of bodie. But the Lord teſtifieth the contrary and teacheth his peo-

Eccleſ.4.6.

ple.

ple both by word and effect, that that onely is of worth and eſtimation which his ſeruants obtaine by lawfull means, and his bleſſing vpon them. And becauſe this point is moſt true, and the world beleeueth not that any trueth is in it, hee confirmeth the ſame in diuers places: as Chap. 15.16. *Better is a little with the feare of the Lord, then great treaſure and trouble therewith.* That is, with feare, care, ſorrow, or the checke of an euill conſcience. So in the Pſalme. 37.16. *A ſmall thing vnto the righteous, is better then great riches to the wicked and mightie.*

Firſt, in reſpect of the giuer thereof, it is the Lords hand that beſtoweth it vpon them as a teſtimonie of his loue, and an earneſt of more excellent treaſures. Now an Angell from the Kings owne hand in fauour, is more regarded then a pound from an other, vpon other occaſions. And how great a ſubſtance may a man haue conueyed to him by receiuing a ſhilling, or teſter for poſſeſſion of all that is paſſed ouer to him by deede of gifture? And how large demeanes may a man bee eſtated in by taking a turfe in way of lyuerie, and ſeiſon? Now though euerlaſting life be principally confirmed to vs by the ſpirit of adoption, yet the Lord would haue his eternall fauour to his Saints to bee ſeene and acknowledged euen in his earthly benefits. *Reaſons.* 1.

Secondly, it is ſanctified vnto them by the word of God, with prayer, and thankeſgiuing. 1. Tim. 4. 5. 2

Thirdlie, his bleſſing maketh it to ſerue and ſuffice them for all needefull vſes: it ſatisfieth their hearts: it is competent for their bodies: it is ſufficient for their families. And as their ſtate is increaſed, ſo their hands are opened to diſtribute to the poore, and to contribute to the ſeruices of God, and euery way to ſhew their readines to doe good, ſo as God may haue glorie, his ſeruants refreſhing, and their owne ſoules an euerlaſting recompence of immortalitie. 3

Conſolation to all godly, faithfull, and induſtrious perſons, that they are euery way wealthie and rich: rich in glory which is reſerued for them in heauen: rich in weldoing: rich in ſpirituall graces: rich in earthly ſubſtance, if enough of that which is deare and precious may make a man to be rich. That ſaying which is in the fifteenth Chapter of this booke, is not to be reſtrained to any *Vſe.* Prou. 15.6.

one, but holdeth true for euery one that feareth God, *that the houſe of the righteous hath much treaſure.* Things that are coſtly and of great price, are not to bee rated by compariſon with the meaſure of baſer matters, nor according to the roome which they fill vp. A little gold ouerualueth much leade or iron, many great pebbles are not matchable in worth with one pearle which is farre leſſe then they are, a boxe full of rich diamonds, is better then a houſe full of woode, and ſtraw, or other ſtuffe that is courſe or common. And ſo ſtandeth the caſe with good mens poſſeſſions; the bleſſing of God with his mercie and fauour doth conuert them into iewels for their vſe and benefit, and worketh ſuch comfortable effects by them, as all the treaſures of the wicked can neuer yeeld vnto them.

Verſe 28. *Life is in the way of righteouſnes, and in that path way there is no death.*

LIfe, &c. The meaning is, that they which are righteous men iuſtified by the merites of Chriſt, and ſanctified by his ſpirit, and obedient to his will in working that which is agreeable to his word, are in ſtate of life euerlaſting. The life of grace they haue poſſeſſion of alreadie; the life of glory is aſſured to them by the life of grace: whoſoeuer hath the one, can neuer faile of the other. And therefore it is ſaid that there is no death in that path. They are deliuered from the firſt death, which hath power ouer all ſinfull men, in this world: and they ſhall neuer come into the ſecond, which is the portion of reprobates in the world to come. And this is confirmed by the teſtimonie of Chriſt himſelfe, ſaying, *Verily, verily, I ſay vnto you, he that heareth my word and beleeueth in him that ſent me, hath euerlaſting life, and ſhall not come into condemnation, but hath paſſed from death to life.* The doctrine which the words would miniſter, hath been declared, and proſecuted in the nineteenth verſe of the former chapter, where it is ſaide that *righteouſnes leadeth to life*, and therefore it is needeleſſe to handle it againe in this place. Onely let thus much be ſpoken, that the holy Ghoſt doth not in vaine ſo often promiſe life to them that ſeeke, and ſerue him. He doth repeate it more then twentie

Iohn 5. 24.

twentie times in this one booke, beſides the mention that the other parts of ſcripture doe make of it, almoſt euery where. It is therefore a point of certentie to them that lay hold on it: It is a point of difficultie, and not eaſilie beleeued: ſithence God to helpe our hearts doth againe, and againe redouble it: and it is a point of great importance, requiring a ſerious and conſtant meditation, without which men grow barren, and careleſſe in doing all good dueties: and by which they are made rich and plentifull in all holy ſeruices. The conſideration of life, and of ſuch a life will incourage the heart, and open the mouth, and ſtrengthen the hands, and make the feete nimble to runne in the waies of righteouſnes: all that they can doe in obedience, they will account too little, and nothing that they ſuffer for wel-doing, they will thinke to much.

*FINIS.*

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## The Author to the Reader.

*THou art to be aduertiſed, good Reader, that ſundrie faults haue eſcaped in this Treatiſe, moſt by ouerſight of him that copied it out and made it readie for the Preſſe; and ſome few were committed in the printing: the greateſt part, and I think all, are here collected for thee in briefe; I pray thee take notice of them, and reforme them in their places according to this direction.*

Pag 13. lin. 2. reade, *and their ſoules alſo ſlexible.* pag. 30. l. 10. r. *their perſwaſions.* p. 36. l. 29. for commoditie reade *brethrens.* pag. 38 l. 3. r. *into accuſations.* p. 39. l. 30. r. *offer of it to others.* p. 41. l. 31. put out *owne.* pag 42. l. 23 r. *aggrauate.* pag. 43. l. 20 r. *bond.* p 46. l. 35. r *often.* p. 50. l. 14. r. *faſt.* ibid. 34. r. *what cauſeth.* p. 51. l. 5. r. *preſerueth.* ibid. 12. r. *meaunes.* p. 53. l. 27. r. *God heareth them with mercie and fauour.* p. 57. l. 9. r. *fence.* p. 66. l. 36. r. *deſcried.* p. 69. l. 14. r. *greatly.* pag. 78. l. 26. r. *deprauation.* p. 86. l. 6. r. *good ſprings.* p. 91. l. 34. r. *as.* pag. 94. l. 5. r. *ſpoken.* p. 95. l. 11. r. *was an.* p. 108. l. 1. r. *ſharpe.* p. 139. l. 16. r. *deeme.* p. 143 l. 29. r. *degree.* p. 144. l. 2. r. *crueltie.* pag. 156. l. 28. r. *couetous.* p. 160. lin. 37. r. *depoſed.* p. 166. l. 14. r. *but to the.* p. 196. l. 26. r. *ſcares.* p. 280. l. 22. r. *moueth.*